NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
TOWN HALL, BOMBAY-400 023.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Digitized with financial assistance from
NSDL
Technology, Trust & Reach
on 16 November, 2018

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

# HISTORICAL AND LITERARY STUDIES VOLUME 9

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Oxford University Press
*London Edinburgh Glasgow New York*
*Toronto Melbourne Cape Town Bombay*
Humphrey Milford *Publisher to the University*

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

# OXFORD Historical and Literary STUDIES

Issued under the direction of C. H. FIRTH and WALTER RALEIGH Professors of Modern History and English Literature in the University of Oxford

VOLUME 9

# WARREN HASTINGS IN BENGAL 1772–1774

BY

*M. E. MONCKTON JONES*

OXFORD
At the *Clarendon Press*
1918

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

BRA
OF THE
BOMBA
BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC

# OXFORD HISTORICAL AND LITERARY STUDIES

VOLUME I. ELIZABETHAN ROGUES AND VAGABONDS AND THEIR REPRESENTATION IN CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE. BY FRANK AYDELOTTE.

VOLUME II. ANGLO-ROMAN RELATIONS, 1558–1565. BY C. G. BAYNE, C.S.I.

VOLUME III. THE HOUSE OF LORDS IN THE REIGN OF WILLIAM III. BY A. S. TURBERVILLE.

VOLUME IV. A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SAMUEL JOHNSON. BY W. P. COURTNEY. REVISED AND SEEN THROUGH THE PRESS BY D. NICHOL SMITH.

VOLUME V. HENRY TUBBE. SELECTIONS EDITED FROM THE MSS. BY G. C. MOORE SMITH.

VOLUME VI. KEIGWIN'S REBELLION (1683–4). AN EPISODE IN THE HISTORY OF BOMBAY. BY RAY AND OLIVER STRACHEY.

VOLUME VII. LORD SELKIRK'S WORK IN CANADA. BY CHESTER MARTIN.

VOLUME VIII. WALPOLE BALLADS. EDITED BY M. PERCIVAL.

VOLUME IX. WARREN HASTINGS IN BENGAL, 1772–1774. BY M. E. MONCKTON JONES.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

# WARREN HASTINGS IN BENGAL

## 1772–1774

103070

BY

M. E. MONCKTON JONES

---

WITH APPENDIXES OF HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED DOCUMENTS

---

Gg e 56

*OXFORD*

At the CLARENDON PRESS, A.D. 1918

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

954.14
Mon/war
103070

PRINTED IN ENGLAND
AT THE OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

00103070

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

# PREFACE

FEW makers of English history are better known by name to their countrymen than Warren Hastings, but those who narrate his career or criticize his policy have given little prominence to a vital side of his work.

In 1765 Clive set up a Dual system of administration in Bengal which rendered the next seven years the worst in the country's history. In 1772 Warren Hastings became President and reorganized the government, now actually assumed for the first time by the English. Attention has been so focused on his disputes with Philip Francis and the consequent trial that his economic, civil, and judicial measures for relieving the distressed natives often escape notice. The aim of this book has been to try to correct the balance by presenting an account of them in the words of the Company's servants themselves, adding in the introductory chapters no more than was necessary to connect the documents on one thread—for, like Hastings, 'I am little more than the compiler of other men's opinions'.

For several reasons the period treated is confined to the two years 1772 to 1774. Hastings governed the three Presidencies for eleven years after Lord North's Regulating Act, but he was Governor of Bengal for two years before it, and it is in the civil administration set up during those two years that the foundations of our system in India were laid. Hastings brought twenty-three years of Indian experience to the work: for those two years his hands were free; he planned, organized, and executed his own policy unhindered; it is by the action he then took that he must stand or fall. Whether the object of study be his character or the justice of our rule in India the years that follow can best be understood in the light of his original aims, for much of the legislation of the three succeeding decades was designed either to carry out those aims or to prevent their fulfilment.

Much the larger part of the documents have been drawn from the manuscripts at the India Office, the rest from the Winter collection at the British Museum. In attempting their interpretation I have been guided by the modern authorities enumerated.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

I am deeply indebted to the courtesy of the members of the Record and Library departments of the India Office for clues to the labyrinthine wealth of manuscript correspondence and help in elucidating native terms. Mr. S. C. Hill has aided me generously by reading and criticizing my chapters, and by bringing his wide experience to bear upon difficulties, while to him is due the interesting map reproduced from the Orme Manuscripts.

Permission to reproduce the two fine portraits of Warren Hastings has been most courteously accorded by my friends Mrs. Wansbrough and Mr. MacGregor. The Abbot shows him at approximately the date of his final return to England. It has always been in the hands of his sister, Mrs. Woodman, and her descendants. In the second we have perhaps a work of the early seventies, just the period of the reforms. The well-known painting by T. B. Kettle in the National Portrait Gallery is probably a replica of this more complete portrait, which experts are inclined to attribute to the same artist. The characterization is here, in my opinion, more delicate and the colouring truer to life, while there is greater finish in some details of the costume. The picture has passed in a direct line to the present owner from his ancestor, John Stewart, Judge Advocate-General, who either purchased or received it as a gift from Hastings himself.

My gratitude is due above all to my former tutor, Professor Ramsay Muir, without whose encouragement and guidance the book would not have been attempted, and to whose patient revision and illuminating criticism it owes what claim it may have to the attention of students of Indian history. For the spelling of Indian names and terms I have consulted the *Imperial Gazetteer*, H. W. Wilson's *Glossary*, and Gules' *Hobson-Jobson*, except in a few cases where the word has become anglicized or it has seemed wiser to use the form prevailing in the documents. The spelling and punctuation of the original documents have been adhered to except in a few cases where the eighteenth-century use of capital letters has not been reproduced.

Since many inaccuracies must, I fear, still remain, despite much time and many efforts spent to remove them, I would plead the disabilities of one who is neither an Indian official nor in any direct contact with the life of India, but drawn to the subject merely by its inherent interest.

M. E. MONCKTON JONES.

DUKE'S RIDE, CROWTHORNE, BERKS.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

# CONTENTS


PAGE

PREFACE . . . . . vii

I. THE NATIVE STATE . . . . . 1

APPENDIX : Anonymous Account of Bengal . . 28

II. ENGLISH SETTLEMENTS . . . . . 30

APPENDIX: Hastings's report of silk trade . . . 46

III. 1757–1772 . . . . . 47

APPENDIX : First Offer of Diwani to Clive :

1. Dispatch from Calcutta Board to the Court of Directors . . . . . 67

2. Accounts of Kasim Ali and His Government. Memorial written by W. Hastings, undated . 68

Extract from the Letter of a Servant at Murshidabad to the Calcutta Board . . . 70

Minute of Mr. Sumner on the Method of Revenue Collections . . . . . 71

3. Arrangements made on the Accession of Nujum-ud-Daula : Minute by Mr. Gray protesting against the Treaty concluded by President Spencer and the Council . . . . . 72

4. Reports of Committees of the House of Commons. To Writers : 1st Covenants issued in 1756, in use till July 1770. 2nd Covenants issued May 1764, in use till July 1772. 3rd Covenants issued July 1770, in use till July 1772 . . 74

5. Trade Abuses in 1765 :

Letter from Mohamed Reza Khan sent to the Secret Committee at Calcutta . . . . . 75

Resolution of the Secret Committee taken in consequence on the same Date . . . . . 76

Letter from Mohamed Reza Khan, received October 4, 1765 . . . . . 77

Orders of the Select Committee . . . . . 77

Letter from Francis Sykes on the subject of the Custom-houses . . . . . 78

Second Letter from F. Sykes . . . . . 79

Third Letter from F. Sykes . . . . . 79

Regulations issued by the Secret Committee, circulated by the Ministers to the Zemindars and Officers of Government, with passages from Sykes's draft omitted or modified in the Secret Committee's official version . . . . . 80


NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

PAGE

F. Sykes's Conception of the Office of Diwan . 82
Trade Abuses, 1765–1769: Letter from Becher, Resident at Murshidabad in succession to F. Sykes . . . . . 82
Minute by Verelst on Trade Abuses . . . 83
6. Supervisorships. Documents from the Correspondence of the Secret Committee at Calcutta:
Letter from Becher, Resident at Murshidabad . 85
Orders to the Supervisors issued on August 16, 1769 . . . . . 88
Further Orders to the Supervisors . . . 89
Effect of the Supervisorship. Reports of the Resident . . . . . 90
7. Reports of the Famine of 1770:
Report from Mohamed Ali Khan, Faujdar of Purnea, to Mr. Becher, Resident at Murshidabad . 91
Report from Ujagger Mull, Amil of Jessore . . 91
Report of Mr. Ducarel to Mr. Becher . . . 92

IV. HASTINGS'S FIRST OFFICES . . . . 93
APPENDIX: Report on the Investment made by Hastings to the Council at Madras . . 107

V. SITUATION OF EAST INDIA COMPANY . . 112
APPENDIX:
I. *List of the most important Dispatches sent in the years 1769 to 1773 by the Court of Dire tors to the President and Council of Bengal* . . . 126
1. Instructions to Commissioners . . . . 127
2. Letter to the Commissioners, dated March 23, 1770 . . . . . 130
3. Hastings's Abstract of the Directors' Letter of March 23, 1770, to the President and Council . 133
4. Hastings's Abstract of the Letter of April 10, 1771 134
5. General Letter to President and Council . . 135
6. General Letter of March 25, 1772, to President and Council . . . . . 139
7. General Letter of April 7, 1773, to President and Council . . . . . 141
8. Letter of April 16, 1773 . . . . . 145
II. *Hastings's Views and Plans*:
9. Letter to Mr. Purling, Chairman of the Court of Directors, 1771–2 . . . . . 146
10. Letter to Mr. Colebrooke, Chairman of the Court of Directors, 1772–3 . . . . . 148
III. *The Proposed Regulations* . . . . . 152

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

PAGE

VI. INITIATION OF REFORMS . . . . . 166

APPENDIX :

1. Letter to Mr. Purling, Chairman of the Court of Directors, 1771–2 . . . . . 181
2. Letter to Clive . . . . . 182
3. Letter from the Secret Department of the Calcutta Council . . . . . 183
4. General Letter, Secret Department . . . 184
5. General Letter from the Select Committee . . 184
6. General Letter, Secret Department . . . 185
7. General Letter, Secret Department . . . 186
8. The Treaty of Benares . . . . . 187
9. General Letter, Secret Committee . . . 188
10. President's Minute . . . . . 189
11. The Nawab's Household . . . . . 191
12. The Inquiry into the Conduct of Mohamed Reza Khan . . . . . 193
13. President's Letter to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors . . . . . 195
14. Trial and Fate of Rajah Shitab Roy . . . 198
15. Regulations proposed for Standing Orders of Council . . . . . 199
16. Letter to Mr. Sulivan . . . . . 200
17. The Board of Inspection . . . . . 203
18. Board of Inspection (*continued*) . . . . 204
19. Appointment of Mr. Barwell to be Chief of Dacca and Mr. Lane to be Chief of Patna . . 204
20. Board of Inspection, Auditor, &c. . . . 205
21. Reform of the Military Establishment. Pargana Battalions abolished . . . . . 206
22. Hastings's Letter to Colebrooke, Chairman of Directors . . . . . 206
23. Dacoits . . . . . 207
24. Kuch Behar and Sunnyasis . . . . . 212
25. Punishment of Mutiny . . . . . 213
26. Operations against the Bhutanese (Capt. Stewart's Orders) . . . . . 214
27. Bhutanese and Sunnyasis : Further Operations . 216
28. Sunnyasis . . . . . 217
29. Hill-men of Rajmahal . . . . . 217

VII. TRADE REFORMS AND FINANCE . . . . 219

APPENDIX : Trade Reform and Finance :

1. Company's Investment . . . . . 236
2. Company's Investment (*continued*) . . . . 236
3. Comptroller appointed . . . . . 238

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

PAGE

4. High Prices result from Open Trade . . . 238
5. Abolition of Dustuks . . . . . 239
6. Minute regarding the Future Arrangement of the Customs . . . . . 240
7. The Monopolies. Salt . . . . . 246
8. First Regulations issued . . . . . 247
9. Answer to Mr. Baber's Appeal on behalf of Contractors . . . . . 248
10. Modification of the First Regulations: Letter from Mr. Lushington of Hugli . . . . . 248
11. Salt Lands farmed on Five-year Leases . . . 249
12. Failure to sell the Salt . . . . . 251
13. 'My own Salt Plan' . . . . . 251
14. Opium Monopoly . . . . . 252
15. Bank . . . . . 253

VIII. THE LAND SETTLEMENT . . . . . 255

APPENDIX:

1. The Lease System . . . . . 266
2. Separate Regulations (enclosed in Letter to Colebrooke, March 26, 1772) . . . . . 268
3. Summary of the Resolutions for the Settlement of the Lands . . . . . 274
4. Obstacles to a true Assessment of Values . . 275
5. Midnapore Settlement . . . . . 277
6. Duration of Leases in Bihar . . . . . 278
7. Report of Revenue Plans in Bihar . . . . 279
8. Plan of a New Settlement, 1775: Minute of Hastings and Barwell . . . . . 280

IX. REVENUE . . . . . 287

APPENDIX:

1. Creation of Calcutta Committee of Revenue (Letter from the Secretary to the Members of the New Committee) . . . . . 293
2. Revenue Returns, 1770 and 1771 . . . . 293
3. Regulations for the Khalsa . . . . . 295
4. Revenues of Bengal, 1765–71 . . . . . 296
5. Account of Revenues, 1771 . . . . . 296
6. Kanungoes (Account of Mr. Baber, Resident at Midnapore, and consequent Reduction of their Powers) . . . . . 297
7. State of the Country, 1773 . . . . . 300
8. Revenues of Bihar and Kuch Behar . . . . 302

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

PAGE

9. New Plan of Revenue Department (Letter to Mr. Boulton, Chairman of the Court, 1773–4) . 303
10. Permanent and Temporary Plans of Revenue Reform . . . . . 304

X. JUSTICE . . . . . 309

APPENDIX:

1. Plan for the Administration of Justice . . . 324
2. The New Calcutta Courts of Justice of 1772 . 326
3. The Mayor's Court . . . . . 328
4. Hastings's Letters to the Revenue Board on the subject of Criminal Law and to Middleton, Resident at Murshidabad, enclosing Nizamut Records . . . . . 329
5. Inferior Courts . . . . . 335
6. Hastings's Views on Native Law . . . . 337

INDEX AND GLOSSARY . . . . . 339

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

# ILLUSTRATIONS

WARREN HASTINGS, aged about 40.
From the painting by Kettle (?) inherited by Cortland MacGregor, Esq., from his ancestor John Stewart, Judge Advocate-General in Bengal in 1773. Photographed by Mary Bent . . . . . *Frontispiece*

MAP OF BENGAL . . . . . *facing p.* xvi

WARREN HASTINGS, aged about 65.
From the painting by Abbot in the possession of Mrs. Wansbrough . . . . . *facing p.* 322

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

# LIST OF MS. AUTHORITIES

## INDIA OFFICE RECORDS

(1) Abstract Coast and Bay.
(2) Bengal Abstracts.
(3) Bengal Dispatches.
Bengal Letters received.
Bengal Public Consultations.
Bengal Revenue Consultations.
Bengal Secret Consultations.
Bengal Imperial Press List.
Calcutta Committee of Revenue Consultations.
Committee of Circuit.
Court Minutes.
Home Series.
Home Miscellaneous.
Kasimbazar Factory Records.
Madras Records.
Wilkes's Miscellaneous.
Orme's MSS.

## BRITISH MUSEUM

Additional MSS.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

THE map facing is taken from Orme's MSS. Bengal, No. 164 B. Its interest lies in the fact that it portrays the divisions of the country under the native administration, before the East India Company assumed the Diwani.

The date of it can only be fixed by internal evidence, which shows it to have been drawn up on information less complete than the earliest of Rennell's printed maps, that of 1768 (India Office Map Records, No. B. x. 15), of which the original was brought home by Clive in 1767. The year 1766 will thus be the latest date for our map. Now Rennell was appointed Surveyor on Nov. 26, 1764 (*vide* Bengal Abstracts, No. 1, p. 48), 'on account of his diligence and capacity in making a survey of the Great River'. It seems probable that this work was the outcome of the same journey and was finished some time in the year 1765, so that it would represent the native divisions of Bengal while still unmodified by English control, which obtained at that date only in Burdwan, Midnapore, and Chittagong.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

# CHAPTER I

## THE NATIVE STATE

**Bengal in 1770—Area, Character, Population, Economic and Social Condition—The Village Community—The Zemindari—Trade and Industry—The Nawab's position, government, court.**

In the middle of the eighteenth century there existed in Bengal a society of mixed race, of immemorial age, and of highly complex structure; but the Government in Bengal, as in other Provinces of the Mogul Empire, was falling into decay with the collapse of that rule. Into this complex organism, at a critical time, the foreign body of the English East India Company had intruded itself. It had set up an irritation which the native Governors of Bengal and the Directors of the Company in England were alike impotent to allay.

In the year 1770 natural disasters, drought, storm, and famine, came to enhance the distress of the country; but in the critical hour relief was at hand. Warren Hastings was sent by the East India Company to their settlement at Calcutta as Governor in 1772, and by unsparing labour, coupled with imaginative insight into native needs, he converted the presence of the English from a bane into a source of healing and strength, first for Bengal itself, and then for the rest of an ever-widening British India. He made the economic, religious, and social rights of the people his first care, and built up the prosperity of the state upon the welfare of the cultivator. To analyse the work he did in the first two years of his governorship is the aim of this study, for it is on the foundations laid in the years 1772 and 1773 that the stability of British rule in India mainly rests. What Bengal was before the English came there, and how far they had acted upon and altered its condition by 1772, must be the first inquiry, and together with this must be studied the forging of Hastings's character to the temper needed for his task.

The Province of Bengal had by the middle of the eighteenth century become practically independent of the Mogul emperors. It then comprised Bengal proper and its sister terri-



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

tories, Bihar and Orissa, a total area of 149,217 square miles, 20,000 more than that of Great Britain and Ireland.[1] It reached from the southern border of Chittagong to the north of Tirhut, and from Assam to a variable line running from the neighbourhood of Palamau to that of Balasore, where it marched with the Maratha lands.

Tirhut and Bihar reach to the skirts of the Himalayas, and on the west are the hills of Chota Nagpur; but with these exceptions the territory of Bengal is a vast alluvial plain, lying under tropic skies and watered by the early and later rains of the east and west monsoons. The damp heat makes it one of the richest grainfields of the earth, and for centuries it has borne a crowded population.

In the thronging multitudes of the Ganges valley the preponderant element is the Dravidian stock, but this is mingled on the east with a Mongol strain and receives through the north a leaven of Aryan blood. Bengal, lying in the extreme south-eastern corner of continental India, is farthest removed from those rock-avenues of the north-west through which invaders have poured time after time, to overrun the original Kolarian and Dravidian peoples of India. Only a small number of the conquerors at each onset penetrated so far east, driving the conquered peoples before them. The dwellers in Bengal are thus a survival of the débris of many successive dominations of northern India, and this is evidenced to-day by the caste system. Caste is the diversity of religion and social custom stereotyped to serve as a barrier between the conquerors and the vanquished. It is natural that where the waves of invasion reached high-water mark the successive layers of flotsam should be most numerous and caste most elaborate, as it is in Upper Bengal. The final flood-tide was the Mahomedan advance, which reaching the north-west at the close of the twelfth century spread into Bengal under Bakhtyar Khilji, the deputy of Mahomed Ghori; it culminated in the sixteenth century in the Empire of the Great Moguls, and from that time Bengal was continuously under Mahomedan rulers until the English acquired the supremacy.

No sound estimate can be formed from the scattered hints

[1] Rennell's Map of Bengal.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

of early authorities of the proportion Mahomedans bore to other races in Bengal in the seventeenth century, beyond the broad fact that they formed the ruling class and not the mass of the population. Many of the original Dravidians of eastern Bengal who had not become Hinduized were converted to Mahomedanism between the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries. As to the proportion in the Mogul's troops in 1655 we have Bernier's evidence: [1] 'For one Mahomedan there are hundreds of Gentiles' (i. e. Hindus); but this does not, of course, apply to Bengal in particular, and native armies were largely recruited at all times from wandering mercenaries and not from the local population. Again, Buchanan's account of Bihar in 1807 gives the number of Mogul families at 600, and the Pathans at 6,000. He says, too, that by that date a large number of the Mahomedan people of Bihar had some admixture of Hindu blood, although the number of converts to Islam was less than it had been in former years.[2] Here too the evidence is indirect and the racial problem is complicated by the religious, but at least we may infer from it that the mass of the population remained Hindu, that the Mahomedan minority itself included many by origin Hindus, and that the various branches of conquering Mahomedans still remained distinct from the people as a whole. If this is true of Bihar, the high road to Bengal, how much more is it likely to have been the case in Bengal itself? On the whole, it may be concluded of Bengal about 1750 that only in the higher ranks of society, the military and administrative posts, was the majority composed of Mahomedans, many of them of Turkish, Afghan, and Pathan origin. The conquering Moguls had neither dispossessed the Dravidian peasantry nor obliterated their social and religious customs.

Differing in much, the various subject groups had at least a common occupation. The masses were drawn to agricultural labour by the nature of their country. The fertile mud soil gave three harvests of various grains in the year. All sorts of fruits abounded; sugar, tobacco, cotton, and mulberry yielded rich returns to husbandry. The working up of

[1] Bernier, 1655–61, *Travels in Hindostan*, p. 188.
[2] Montgomery Martin, *History of Eastern India*, i. 140.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

cotton and silk produced peasant industries and developed a trade which found its highway ready provided in the broad channel of the Ganges. For this great river with its various mouths welcomes the shipping and conducts it from the Bay of Bengal into the heart of the country, and by its tributaries affords access to the whole of northern India. The goods of Cashmere and Tibet find easy transit southwards, and from the dawn of history this traffic drew with it a number of industrial people to settle and build along the Ganges banks, and foster the trade of the rural communities. But they were always a minority, and even to-day[1] the proportion of the agricultural classes to all others is seventy-five per cent. A rough and probably insufficient estimate gives the population of Bengal in 1750 as ten millions. Sir W. Hunter states it[2] as from twenty-four to thirty millions in 1790, and if this estimate is correct it is probable that the population was of equal amount in 1750, since it would take at least twenty years to remedy the appalling ravages of the famine of 1770; Dow, who wrote in 1770, mentions fifteen millions:[3] to-day it exceeds seventy-eight millions. The great Hindu mass of this population, in itself a blend of many peoples, professed a faith no less composite, in which Brahmanism combined and dominated a confusion of earlier nature-worships. The Mahomedan Government, on the other hand, was based on the Koran and the traditions of the first Khalifs. But in each case it was the religious code which formed the basis for the social economy and the civil government, and the two peoples required separate judicial treatment whether in civil or criminal causes.[4]

No polity could well have presented a more complete confusion to alien eyes than did that of Bengal to the merchants from England, who found themselves gradually forced, in self-

[1] *Indian Census*, 1901, pp. 23 and 204. Rural population estimated at 95 per cent., p. 23; agricultural population at ¾, p. 204. Mr. Percy Roxby, who investigated the subject in 1913, puts the proportion at 60 per cent. directly employed in cultivation, 90 per cent. indirectly employed in cultivation.

[2] Sir W. W. Hunter, *Annals of Rural Bengal*, p. 36.

[3] Alex. Dow, *History of Hindostan*, p. cxxxvi.

[4] Hastings in his first year of office employed N. B. Halhed to translate the Hindu laws, and sent home copies of them to Lord Mansfield. *Vide* p. 337; Gleig, iii. 159.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

preservation and for the welfare of its people, to undertake its conduct. In such circumstances the most devoted efforts could not have avoided some serious mistakes, but the East India Company's servants were far from devoting themselves to the problems of government. Their paramount interest was their trade, and it was inevitable that much maladministration, injustice, and oppression should mark the early years of their dominion. Very few of them made any serious study of native customs or requirements or of the profound differences of race, religion, and caste which underlay native susceptibilities. Not many troubled to learn Persian, Hindustani, or Bengali, and all who did not were at the mercy of interpreters in their dealings with high or low. One of the first to attain to a real understanding and appreciation of the native character was Warren Hastings, and he recognized that the key to the hardest part of the problem of English predominance in Bengal lay in the fair treatment of the ryot or cultivator.

The land-system of Hindustan rests on presuppositions unfamiliar to the Western mind, and has no close counterpart in the countries of the West; that of Russia is perhaps of nearest kin to it. Property in land has not the same meaning for the Indian peasant as for our own. It involves rather a right to the produce, or some share of it, than ownership of the soil. It is not the land itself so much as the toil which vivifies it and the harvest it yields that count in India. This native point of view escaped the attention of the English. Consequently the tenure of the land in Bengal proved the most baffling of all the difficulties which faced them. Added to these fundamental misconceptions were complexities of tenure to which they had no clue. The right of the original occupier was in most cases vitiated by economic failure or overlaid by a whole series of claims imposed by conquerors or by their agents for the collection of tribute, or arising from religious obligations. But on the unravelling of this tangle everything depended; for the land-tenure of Bengal from the earliest times has formed the basis of the whole fabric of civil government. Warren Hastings grappled with this problem at the outset of his rule, and his reforms cannot be understood without making some preliminary study of the principles of

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

the native land-system. Its root lies in the organization of the village community, and with this the analysis is best begun.

The earliest and most common form of village in India seems to have been that set up by the original primitive and Dravidian races, and is known as the 'ryotwari' type. In such villages the ryots have separate holdings, and this differentiates them from the 'joint' villages, where the villagers have joint or common rights in the land. The villages mentioned in early Hindu literature seem to be of this ryotwari kind, and this view of its early prevalence is supported by the oldest customs still extant in certain districts. The Dravidians are said to 'have preserved their nationality pure and unmixed, and such as they were at the dawn of history, so they seem to be now'.[1] The evidence, both ancient and modern, portrays small communities scattered within a wide tribal area and isolated in early times by stretches of waste jungle land, as would be the case in any country incompletely peopled. Such villages had no formal boundaries. Each original breaker of the soil claimed the produce of his clearing and might graze his beasts on the surrounding waste. This was held to be reserved for the use of the villagers as far as their watchman, standing on the edge of the arable, could make his voice carry; but it was not their joint property, like our English commons: the property sense was hardly developed far enough for such a conception to arise. The village, thus isolated, was almost forced to become a tiny self-contained and self-subsisting state. A headman ruled, usually no doubt a descendant of the first founder. He was called Patel, a name which survives to-day in southern and western India, where the ryotwari village still exists. His office was hereditary and involved both dignity and responsibility. A special grant of land was his and he took precedence at religious and social festivals. He must answer for the community to the officers of justice and of revenue and had himself the right to raise taxes for the petty expenses of the village. He ruled with the aid of a 'mahato' or scribe, now called a 'patwari', usually a more capable and literate man than his

[1] Holdich, *India*, i. 202.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

superior, and in most cases not one of the villagers, but the nominee of the overlord. To be self-sufficing these villages needed to supplement the cultivators by artisans and handicraftsmen, smiths, potters, and carpenters, and a group of menials to do such tasks as would debase the higher castes. These low-born servants of the common needs were given huts apart from the freeholders, and sometimes a strip of land for their subsistence. Their services were at the call of the community, which paid them out of the harvest-pile of grain.[1] For these village communities, even in the eighteenth century, were little advanced beyond the most primitive economic stage.[2] They hardly understood or needed coin, but used the precious metals for ornament in peaceful times and buried their hoards when raiders threatened. One of the great difficulties that beset English administrators was this absence or periodical disappearance of currency. In the more exposed districts the headman's house was often fortified as a refuge for the community against the raids of hillmen, of dacoits, or of Maratha spearmen. Such, so far as we can penetrate the age-long vista of Indian history, has been the life of the Indian villager from earliest times. The tenacity and longevity of these little village commonweals would be unaccountable, judged merely by their strength to resist an enemy. The secret of it lies first in their producing power as agricultural groups, and secondly in the Indian's love of the soil, a passion as great as or even greater than that of the Irish peasant. Wave after wave of conquerors passed over them, plundering, even temporarily devastating the village; yet century after century the same families of ryots are to be found, like water-weeds when the boat has passed, working back to their old places and settling down to their accustomed functions, though often enough with rights diminished. In them lay India's vitality. If one generation was expelled and died, its successor attempted to return when opportunity offered. The peasant's claim to the particular holding of his fathers was secured by a right of recovery valid for one hundred years.[2]

[1] For facts concerning the ryotwari village see Baden-Powell, *The Indian Village Community*, pp. 8–19. [2] Elphinstone, *History of India*, p. 77.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Thus far the Indian village has been described as an independent organism, self-supporting and self-ruling, unaffected by the rise and fall of dynasties; but this is only in part true to the facts. However foreign such dynasties might be, and however remote their seat of empire, they yet depended for their very existence on this humble source of wealth, the ryot and his produce. Whenever a strong government was set up it tightened its hold on the land revenue. Above all, when the Moguls became supreme the status of the landholding villager was modified for good and all, though he was not radically displaced. The earliest sovereigns seem to have made no specific claim to ownership of the land, whether settled or waste, though such a claim was involved in their receiving a complimentary share of the produce, but at some later point such claims became defined. Certainly the Moguls, like feudal sovereigns, claimed to be the ultimate lords of the land and raised an assessment or rent in every province.[1] This rent took the form of a more or less fixed proportion of the produce of the land.

The first definitely recorded assessment of the amount due from each district is known as the 'Toomar Jumma'. It was drawn up by Todar Mal, Diwan to the great Akbar, and fixed the proportion at a quarter of the produce. In theory this continued to be the amount leviable from the occupants of land till the English acquired control, but in fact the amount varied widely and sometimes rose as high as one-half.[2] This burden was further swelled by two sets of 'abwabs' or additional cesses, the one imposed by the provincial governor, the other by the Zemindar, or district collector; and the repeated prohibitions inserted in 'sanads' or contracts show

[1] Sir W. Hunter, Introduction to *Bengal MS. Records*: 'It must be borne in mind that the collection of revenue formed almost the sole idea of government among the Native Powers who erected themselves on the ruins of the Mogul Empire; that it was essentially the function of government which was made over to the East India Company in 1765 by the Imperial grant for Bengal; and that it was out of the Revenue Administration thus conferred upon the Company that its judicial courts, civil and criminal, and its police system gradually developed.'

[2] *Bengal MS. Records*, i. 28. Holwell, *Historical Events*, p. 221: 'The established ground-rent is three Sicca Rupees per begah (about ⅓ of an English acre) throughout the Empire.'

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

that they were in the habit of imposing fresh cesses on any pretext. 'In the aggregate,' says Sir W. Hunter, 'so much was taken by the State as to leave the land no selling value, beyond that of the crop on it.' There was thus little margin for the ryot above a bare subsistence. The Zemindars were adepts in squeezing the cultivator to the point of ruin and then letting go to prevent his desertion. In fine, under native rule the limit of extortion was commonly the point of exhaustion, and that only. Nevertheless, the peasant in some degree retained his position in relation to the land. For to make any revenue possible, the indispensable cultivator had to be kept at work, and so the ryot's claims to his hereditary holding were allowed and continued to be recorded in written or oral form. Baden-Powell emphasises the baseless security of the peasant holder.[1] He points out that there was never a time when the law forbade the lord to turn out his tenant or so to rack the rent that he preferred flight to the struggle to live. On the other hand, mere economic gravity secured the ryot, for if he fled and left the land untilled, the lord's only chance of revenue vanished with him. The peasant could commonly find a fresh holding or at least occupation: his labour was worth his keep. The only tie that bound him to stay and endure oppressive taxation was his love of the land; and this was so strong that, even when the plot had passed for years into other hands, the peasant would still be able to point out among the new divisions the fields that were the 'sir' or holding of his house. Such was the lowest class of society in Bengal, that of the agricultural peasant or ryot. Under the Mogul Empire the ryot's welfare was carefully cherished and oppression checked so that the ruler could count upon the support of the masses against rebel nobles.

The Great Mogul was the theoretical owner of the whole land. Akbar divided it into twelve great provinces or 'Subas'. Each province was handed over to the care of two officers, the Nawab and the Diwan, who represented the Emperor respectively in his dual character, as conqueror and as landholder The military deputy, Nawab-Nazim or

[1] Baden-Powell, *Land Revenue of India*, p. 137.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Subadar, became a practically independent prince in the latter half of the eighteenth century. At first these officers were appointed and replaced at the Emperor's good pleasure, but they gradually acquired an hereditary hold on their territories. The province of Bengal was acquired by Akbar in 1576, and was thenceforward entrusted to Nawabs. It was divided into circars or governments, of which there were thirty-four at the end of Shah Jehan's reign. Each of these was subdivided into 'parganas', of irregular size, 'the oldest, the least, the most universally known and established division of land throughout Hindostan'.[1] The holders of these parganas obtained so much independence that in 1722 Murshid Kuli Khan, who was both Nawab and Diwan of Bengal under Aurangzeb, found it necessary to reorganize the system. He made thirteen divisions, called chucklas, instead of the ancient circars, and reduced the size of the parganas, increasing the number of them to a total of 1,660. At that date the province paid to the Emperor a farm of forty-three lacs of rupees. This rent was levied only on Khas, i.e. Khalsa or Government land, which then constituted three-quarters of the whole area. The rest was jagir, i.e. land the revenues of which had been granted to individuals.

The care of the finances was the special duty of the Emperor's civil deputy, the Diwan, who was, in the palmy days of the Empire, a separate person from the Nawab and a valuable check upon him.[2] If the Nawab showed a tendency to excessive display or raised too many troops, the Diwan would be instructed to withhold or reduce the proportion of the revenues assigned to him for the expenses of the Nizamut, i.e. his administration. On the other hand, the Diwan was dependent on the Nizamut for any forces which he might require to effect the collection of the revenues. It is obvious that of these two ministers the Nawab would stand the better chance of survival so soon as the central authority grew weak, and in fact the Diwani of Bengal, for a century before Plassey, was constantly

[1] *Parliamentary Papers*, 1812, vol. vii, p. 343; J. Grant's View of the Revenue of Bengal.

[2] The best contemporary account of their relations is in Vansittart's *Narrative*, vol. i, p. iv.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

filled by nominees of the reigning Nawab, with the result that the distinct line between the Nizamut and the Diwani tended to be lost and their functions merged. Originally Nawab and Diwan, each in his own department, shared between them the Emperor's judicial powers. To the Nawab-Nazim, as the representative of force and order, belonged the maintenance of the peace, criminal jurisdiction, and the sole right of inflicting capital punishment. He delegated this power to officers called Faujdars; crimes were tried in local courts of Faujdari Adalut, with an appeal to a court at the capital, known as the Sudder Faujdari. The Diwan, on the other hand, being concerned with the tenure of land and with finance, received the charge of civil jurisdiction, and suits arising out of property were heard in his Revenue courts. The Diwan's office being organized rather to facilitate the collecting of the land revenues than to ensure justice for individuals, his Khalsa, or Central Court of Revenue, was at once the seat of justice and the Court of Exchequer. Below it and with a right of appeal to the Royroyan, the head of the Khalsa, or to the Diwan himself, were Courts of Diwani Adalut under deputy Diwans for the circars, and local courts, held at the cutcheri of each pargana or Zemindari. Thus below the chief officials the work of revenue collection, and along with it that of justice of a rough and ready character, was in the hands of innumerable agents. They may be classified very broadly under two headings with respect to their original functions, as (1) actual collectors, (2) recorders or inspectors. To the former belong such groups as the Zemindars, the Talukdars and Jagirdars, the Chowdries, Tahsildars, and Mutahids; to the latter the Kanungoes, Darogoes, Mutasaddis, and Amils.

By far the most important of these is the Zemindar, a name which has come to be applied loosely to all farmers of the revenue. From the time of Warren Hastings to that of Lawrence the status and powers of the Zemindar have given rise to controversy. The position is not easily defined by reference to European analogies or brought under English categories. Sometimes Zemindars appear with the characteristics

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

of landowners, sometimes their position suggests a faint analogy with feudal lords; they act now as revenue collectors, again as local magistrates or chiefs of police. The Zemindars' position, in fact, seems to have hovered between these conceptions and partaken of their various attributes. Zemindars have been more or less independent, according to the strength or weakness of the superior Government. Indeed, in the India of the eighteenth century, precise definition of tenures was neither possible nor perhaps desired. In the general absence of law and order vagueness gave prospects to the ambitious or the dexterous which often proved more valuable than the problematical protection which rigid definition might afford. To ask 'What was a Zemindar in 1770?' is like asking 'What was a manor before Domesday?' and the question is as unlikely to be answered by any single formula. The very attempt of English administrators to define the status of a Zemindar tended to produce an alteration in the position they held. One of the difficulties of Hastings and his successors was this aptness of their employers or their colleagues to adopt too precise a definition of the Zemindar and to act upon it hastily. Thus Philip Francis made the profound mistake of considering the Zemindars as landowners with an hereditary right to their lands. The error gave rise to much mistaken legislation both at the time and in after years, for as Sir John Shore said, 'Every man who has been long employed in the management of the revenues of Bengal will, if candid, allow that his opinion on many important points has been often varied, and that the information of one year has been rendered dubious by the experience of another'.[1]

But while it would be unwise to attempt the precise definition of the Zemindar in a sentence, certain broad facts emerge from the chaos of evidence. The Zemindar was first and foremost a collector of the revenue. The district allotted to him did not become his land, though he usually received a personal estate within it, known as his 'havelly' (*Hawali*) and exempted from tribute. The conditions of tenure of the Zemindari were payment of an annual composition for the

[1] *Parliamentary Papers*, vol. vii, p. 169.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

revenue or tribute; sometimes military service; and always the administration of justice in petty civil causes and the preservation of order. Thus the Rajah Chet Sing undertakes the following administrative responsibilities for the Zemindari of Benares:

'I will keep the highroads in such repair, that travellers may pass and repass in the fullest confidence and security. There shall be no robberies and murders committed within my boundaries; but (God forbid) should anyone notwithstanding be robbed or plundered of his property, I will produce the thieves, together with the stolen property. Should I fail, I myself will make good. I will refrain from the collecting of any of the *abwab*[1] which have been abolished or prohibited by the Government.'[2]

This undertaking shows that in addition to, and as a result of, his revenue engagement, the Zemindar had the authority of a police magistrate. To what extent this was usual will appear from the following criticism by Hastings of a Minute of his Councillors:

'I venture to pronounce with Confidence that "by the Constitution of Bengal the Zemindar neither presided in the Criminal[3] Court of his District nor pronounced nor executed Sentence on all Offences less than Capital" [as was asserted in the Minute], nor on any Offences whatsoever except the Non-payment of the Rents. "He was answerable", it is true, "for the Peace and good Order of the Country as far as his Jurisdiction extended, but only as the Subordinate Instrument of a larger System. The Land-Servants or ancient Militia of the Country were under his immediate Charge, and, being distributed throughout the Zemindarry, enabled the Zemindar both to watch over its internal Quiet and to obtain Information of whatever passed in any part of it, and so far the Foujdarry Jurisdiction is inherent in the Zemindar. In the Exercise of it he was subject to a Foujdar who had the Superintendence of a District comprehending many Zemindarries and had the Thanahs or inferior Stations under the Charge of Officers and armed Men dependent on him, besides a part of the Land-servants of each Zemindarry, the rest being employed to guard the Villages and enforce the Collections. It was the Zemindar's

[1] *Abwab* = additional taxes.
[2] *Bengal Records*, i. 39.
[3] Unquestionably he presided in the civil court.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Duty to give constant Intelligence to the Nabob through the Roy royan and to assist the Foujdar in the Apprehension of Robbers and in executing the Measures which were required of him for preserving the peace of the Country; but this Duty first and immediately belonged to the Foujdar, who was the Representative of the Nazim, and "to him the People looked up for Justice and protection even against their chiefs" [i. e. the Zemindars]. The Foujdar was the Check even upon the Zemindars, who were often, and those of Dacca District always, the Patrons and Abettors of dacoyts, whose Haunts and Practices it was their especial Duty to detect.' The Zemindari of Burdwan was allowed the exercise of a foujdarry Jurisdiction by a special Sunnud from the Nazim.' [1]

The Zemindar here appears in a dual rôle: in his normal capacity he is an agent in the Diwani hierarchy, but since he acts also under command of the Faujdar, the local officer for military and criminal affairs, he becomes thus in addition a subordinate of the Naib Nazim. The two branches of government which emanate from the person of the Emperor at one end through his Nazim and Diwan, meet again in the person of the Zemindar at the other end of the series. The police authority indicated above, while it was indispensable to empower the holder to raise the dues in his district, was liable to abuse. It became the crying evil of the Zemindar system, since it enabled him on the one hand to oppress and exhaust the ryot, and on the other to defy his superiors or even throw off his dependence.

The Zemindar held his official title by 'sanad' or charter, and each sanad set forth the character and incidents of the position thus granted. But while the main features of the Zemindar tenure may be taken as established, two questions remain undetermined: In the first place, was the Zemindar an hereditary official? In the second place, were there any clearly recognized limits to the exactions he might make from the cultivator?

As to the first point, Hastings in 1773 collected evidence from the chief native authorities.[2] In the main these

[1] Bengal Secret Consultations, Range A. 32, pp. 181–6.
[2] *House of Commons Reports*, vi, Select Committee of 1782.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

authorities agreed that a Zemindari was hereditary, the Emperor's right of recovery being merely nominal, though it was usual to safeguard it by the issue of a fresh sanad to the heir. Further evidence of these witnesses shows that in case of failure of a direct heir male, the succession might pass to a brother, a widow, a daughter, and so forth, and that the Zemindar was free to sell his right if unable to raise the due farm himself. In that case the buyer was obliged to procure a new sanad. But it must be borne in mind that these witnesses were men of the period when India had fallen into confusion and when the governing powers found it constantly more difficult to enforce their authority. In the seventeenth century the evidence might have worn a different aspect. It was as if one hundred years after Charlemagne an inquiry should have been made into the hereditary rights and powers of the counts. But on the whole it is clear that there was a strong tendency to consider the Zemindari an hereditary right, and that the authorities held it to be improper to remove a Zemindar so long as he could produce the fixed farm.

The second question to be examined is whether the Zemindar could appropriate any surplus revenue. A surplus might arise in various ways. The normal land revenue, whether a quarter or two-fifths or any other fraction of the produce, might amount to more than the fixed composition due to the Nawab; the value of the district might be enhanced by such natural causes as the happy diversion of a river channel, or unusual extent of flood on the paddy-fields, by irrigation, or immigration of new workers; the Zemindar might lay new or enhanced cesses in addition to the land-tax and to the customary 'abwab'. In any case, it appears from most accounts that the Zemindar's payment being a farm or composition, he was free to glean what he could from the ryots beyond the amount of it. There is evidence [1] that the Zemindars claimed the maximum profits from the customs, which were included in the Zemindari rights, and this fact lends support to the view that they could also make the maximum

[1] See Forrest, *Selections from Despatches of Governors-General of Bengal*, W. Hastings, vol. i, p. 13.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

profit out of land revenue. But against this must be set the contemporary evidence of an anonymous account of Bengal under the Mogul emperors preserved among the Hastings papers. It appears to have been written about the year 1775, in response to some inquiry of Hastings's, and it professes to give a comparison of the system then in vogue with that of the Mogul rule. Speaking of Zemindars under the Moguls it says, 'They seldom met with severe usage on account of deficiencies provided they rendered a fair account of their collections, and, on the other hand, if they collected more than was specified in the writing the overplus was not regarded as their own right, but was deemed to belong to the Government.'[1] The Zemindar's powers of exaction were theoretically limited by the forms of his sanad, and these the kanungo was authorized to enforce. But his practical power to do so varied with the strength of the imperial or provincial authorities, and in the period just before the founding of the English power the peasants seem to have been left very much to the mercy of the Zemindar class.

Trade, like agriculture, was considered by the Government mainly as a source of revenue, and was to some extent farmed like the land-tribute. Country produce was brought into the town or chief village of the pargana. Here at the 'cutcheri' the Zemindar received the land-tribute, abwab, &c. Market tolls, fees, and fines for Diwani jurisdiction seem also to have been gathered here, and no clear-cut distinction was drawn between the Zemindar's takings from such official and from industrial and agricultural sources.[2] Tolls, besides those taken at the place of sale, were levied at custom-houses set up on all the highways, by road and by river. The former are known as 'gunges', the latter as 'gauts, hauts, or chowkies', and these were farmed like the land-tribute, the chowkeydar paying a fixed sum to the Zemindar, but extorting all he could from the passing merchants on pain of delay or confiscation of their wares. Trade was thus hampered at all points, and only the exceptional fertility of the soil could have supported so wasteful an economy.

[1] *Vide* p. 28.

[2] *House of Commons Reports*, iv. 304.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

The office of Zemindar was not confined to Mahomedans, but was filled more often than not by Hindus. It was, at all periods, necessary that they should be men of standing and acceptable to the people of their districts, consequently descendants of the ancient Hindu Rajas were very commonly the holders. Sometimes great territories represented the former principality or kingdom of their house, sometimes this had dwindled to a group of villages, but the title of Raja usually implies a claim to former independence and was insisted on by the bearer in preference to the merely official term, Zemindar. Talukdars and Jagirdars too were often of the rank of Raja, though holding in some instances quite small districts, and at times subordinate to the Zemindar.

Below the Zemindar in rank came other collectors, or publicans, as they would have been called in the Roman Empire. Hastings, writing from the Nawab's Court in 1759, defines their positions. Chowdries were 'landholders next in rank to Zemindars';[1] the Tahsildar was 'a Native officer collecting the Revenue from a given tract under the Zemindar, usually one or two parganas, worth two or three lacs of rupees'. The Hindu term 'Mutahid' means a farmer or contractor, but the term was not used in the case of large areas. In the English records the term 'Farmer' is constantly used, and appears to be generally applied to all tax-collectors, though occasionally it seems to imply a distinction between those who were recently installed, as by auction of the lands, and such as had a hereditary claim to the office. All these classes held their position by virtue of an annual rent to be raised for the State, but one group stood on a different footing. The Jagirdar held his territory directly from the Mogul as a reward for signal service or a sign of special favour, and was exempt, properly speaking, from paying the ordinary assessment and from service, though in many cases he had to pay a quit-rent, sometimes very costly; he did not always reside on the land, but took the rents as his own. His quit-rent was

[1] The word means originally the holder of a fourth part, and is generally used for the headman of a caste or trade; it is a Hindu term, whereas Zemindar is Persian, and was a word introduced by the Mogul Government.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

not paid to the Mogul, like the ordinary land-rents, but to the Nawab, and was assigned to the expenses of the Nizamut. The Jagirdar had the right, like the Zemindar, to bequeath his territory, but unlike him he might not alienate it.[1]

It was to facilitate reassessment and the protection of rights by recording the facts of tenure that a second class of revenue officers came into being. The recorders or registrar class proved to be valuable as checks on the collectors. The kanungo's duty was, in its origin, merely to record the facts concerning the tenure of all the lands that lay in his district, both as a guide to the collector in determining how much revenue was due to the State and as a safeguard to the ryot or other landholder that his 'pottah' or contract should not be exceeded or infringed. Properly speaking they should have had no administrative or judicial powers, but by virtue of their control of all documentary evidence of the tenures of land they became the indispensable referees in property suits and all-powerful in the revenue department.[2] The Mutasaddi was 'a Revenue officer intermediate between the Zemindar and the ryot and also between the Naib (i. e. deputy Diwan) and the Zemindar'; he was properly a mere clerk. The Daroga was 'a chief in any government department, a head of police, custom, or excise', that is, an inspector. The mutual position of these two classes of revenue officials, collectors and recorders, varied from time to time as the former strove to assert their independence and the latter to engross fresh influence. Their relations to one another, to the ryots, and to the land presented an impenetrable tangle of problems to the English statesmen who were first confronted with it, and a century of government has hardly served to make it clear.

This survey has so far dealt with the rural communities of Bengal and their treatment by native rulers. It would remain incomplete without a consideration of the trading and industrial minority of the population. Both inland and external commerce of a flourishing character existed before the

[1] *India Office Records*, Range A. 9, Secret Committee Consultations, August 16, 1769.
[2] *Vide* p. 297.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

arrival of the English in Bengal. The inland trade consisted of the traffic in necessaries of life, and was conducted by the natives themselves. The chief commodities were grain of various sorts, of which rice was the most important; salt, much of which was made on the coast of Orissa by a low-caste people called Molungis; fish; oil, large quantities of which were used either in cooking or for anointing the body; cloths of silk or cotton, which were produced in all parts of Bengal; betel-nut, a universal luxury; opium; tobacco; saltpetre; lac and stick-lac. The poverty of the masses in Bengal was extreme, often bordering on starvation, but as long as life could be maintained the demand for grain and oil, salt and betel-nut was constant, and the trade afforded a livelihood to a considerable section of the people.

The produce of Bengal was by no means exhausted in supplying the inland trade. The Ganges valley is the granary of the East, and the native can live on so little that there remains in normal years a large surplus produce of grain, opium, tobacco, tea, salt, &c.; thus a flourishing export trade grew up under the Moguls. Bernier, writing about 1655, says that Hindostan absorbed foreign currency, paying for it in her own goods. Mocha, Bussora, and Gombroon near Ormuz were the three centres of India's trade with Egypt, Arabia, Persia, and the Levant. Much of the gold and silver treasure drawn from the Spanish Indies passed by these channels into Hindostan, there to be converted from coin into ornaments and so lost to the currency of the world.[1] It was not only with her own produce that India purchased this Western trade. Tenasserim, Siam, Pegu, Macassar, and the Maldives furnished spices, ambergris, ivory, and pearls, while from China and Japan came the lacquer-work and porcelain that incited the emulation of Sèvres, Dresden, and Staffordshire.

The carrying of this oversea trade was even so early as 1650 in the hands of Europeans, for the Hindus are not a seafaring people, and to strict observers of their caste a sea-voyage is still a defilement. In the Middle Ages the ships that sailed from ports of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf for Bengal and

[1] Bernier, *Travels in Indostan*, p. 183.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

the East were manned and owned by Arabs; these were displaced and succeeded by Portuguese, by Dutch, and by Englishmen. We were the last competitors to enter the carrying trade on these far seas. It was then a short step to making settlements along the coast and to obtaining a hold over the native merchants. The settlements were confined for a quarter of a century to ports on the west or on the Carnatic, and English traders only reached Bengal in 1633.

The manufactures of Bengal, however, had long supplied much of the material of this trade. They were not produced in great centres of industry like our modern towns. The methods rather resembled the more primitive practices of Europe in the Middle Ages. Each village worked up the produce of its own fields or groves, the peasants spinning, weaving, carving, &c., in their own huts or compounds in the intervals of tillage or harvesting. The conversion of raw silk and cotton into cloths was the main industry of Bengal; and the natives, especially those of Rajshahi and Dacca, had attained to an extraordinary skill in the craft, due no doubt in a measure to inherited aptitude, the outcome of caste restrictions. For caste rules forbade the workers passing from one occupation to another, and an industry which in one district stood high in repute might in another be forbidden as degrading. Such rules were still binding in 1807, when Buchanan-Hamilton surveyed parts of Bengal. He states, for instance, that although blacksmiths and potters were of good standing in Bengal, they were in Bihar considered to be impure castes. Carpenters were of low caste in both districts, while to drive the plough was so degrading an act that no ryot would plough his own lands, but hired a low-caste driver with his team. Weaving, while it was a staple employment of the Bengal ryot, was restricted to low-caste men in Bihar. Thus the peasant could not rise: men were bound to follow the industry of their fathers or to drop into a lower grade, and it followed that the practice of hereditary trades became the rule in India. Castes or gilds of artificers existed, for in Akbar's reign the Kotwal or chief officer of police in a town was charged to see that each gild had a master and a broker to arrange their sales. He was

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

further to assign special quarters 'to butchers, hunters of beasts, washers of the dead, sweepers and such stoney-hearted, gloomy-dispositioned creatures'. This Kotwal was an important officer, the counterpart in the towns of the official known in the country districts as the Faujdar. He was responsible for the general order of the towns; for raising the due tribute from merchants; he had to regulate prices and might not allow sales to be made outside the city boundaries. But while he thus protected the interests of the ruler he was also to safeguard the simplicity of the peasant and to forbid citizens to act as their agents. The greatest care for the welfare of the ryot was shown in the legislation of the earlier Moguls.[1]

Yet the condition of the labouring classes in Bengal seems to have been nearly always one of poverty, for they were content to live on little, which was easily obtained. The ruling classes rather than the peasant profited by years of plenty, while in times of dearth the ryots often starved, for they had no resources. One of the most crying evils of India has long been the practice of money-lending. The peasant's margin of subsistence is so low and the return for labour so quick and plentiful in good seasons, that he is on the one hand easily reduced to starvation and on the other tempted to borrow in the hope of a quick turn of the wheel. He mortgages his implements of husbandry, borrows money to buy seed or a loom, and is at the mercy of the money-lender.* But it is not to the usurer's interest to press him too hard, lest he abscond. The industries of Bengal were all conducted on a system of loans or advances, the shroff or money-changer financing the merchants, who in turn employed delolls or gomastahs to advance money, implements, or raw materials to the actual producers, in return for a right to the finished goods. The agents marked the finished cloth or the cake of salt with their master's seal, and the ryots were bound to work for them until the tale of promised goods was complete. The system was open to grievous abuses which could only have been checked by a thorough and universal organization of justice. This was signally lacking; the Zemindars and Faujdars were

[1] *Ain-i-Akbari*, Jarrett's translation, vol. ii, pp. 43–7.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

often themselves in the grip of the shroff, while it was perhaps at the Nawab's Court that his loans were most of all indispensable. For the whole community was honeycombed by usury. 'The native princes make their payments in bonds,' says Law, 'and it depends on the bankers what any man shall get for his bonds.' The great financiers of Bengal were called Seths. 'The house of Jaget Seth, or rather of its chiefs, who are named Seth Mahtab Rai and Seth Sarup Chand, bankers of the Mogul,' says Law, 'are, I can say, the movers of the revolution . . . it was this same house of bankers that overthrew Sarfarez Khan to enthrone Aliverdi Khan, and who during the reign of the latter had the management of all important business.'[1]

Their importance is noted again by Ghulam Husain Khan in his history of Bengal.[2] He says that the grandsons of Jagat Seth Fath Chand could pay a bill of exchange at sight for a crore of rupees (i. e. £1,000,000 sterling). 'In the native administration', he adds, 'this house was security for the renters of the revenue, and thus the collections in general passed through their hands.' They acquired great political importance, and the rivalries of native princes were frequently decided by the weight of the rupees which they could pour into the scales.

Other prominent figures in the world of native industry were the Armenians. From the days of Timur, who overthrew the independence of the Maliks in their native Armenia, this people was dispersed and many of them penetrated India. There, by their ability and solidarity, they acquired wealth and maintained a position of influence in commerce, although at the mercy of extortionate local officials. Their strength was apparently rather that of endurance and an extraordinary power of recuperation than an aggressive policy like that of the Seths or the English. To the latter they were constant friends, making common cause in the prosecution of trade

[1] S. C. Hill, *Three Frenchmen in Bengal*, p. 84.
Law here mistakes the term Seth for a surname; in reality it was a term of respect meaning 'the best', and applied to the foremost among Hindu financiers. *Vide* H. H. Wilson's Glossary.

[2] Scott's *Ferishta*, p. 415.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

interests.[1] In the very early days of the Company's settlement in Bengal, Job Charnock was aided by the Armenian Khojah (i. e. leader) Phanoos Khalanthar, and his nephew, the Khojah Sarhad, acted as intermediary for Thomas Pitt and his fellow deputies in 1714 at the Court of Farrukhsiyar.

The influence of foreigners on the industrial life of India is clearly to be seen in the development of town life which they caused. Towns in the east of India which seem to have had any importance before our period derived it from artificial rather than economic causes. The most famous were the ancient capitals or such centres of worship as Benares and Juggernath. The capital of Bengal, tradition says, was established 4,000 years before Akbar's reign at a city called Nadiyah, but it was transferred first to Gaur or Lakhnauti, then in 1564 to Tanda, and in 1592 to Rajmahal, called also Akbarnagar, after the great Emperor. In 1609 Jehangir moved the seat of government to the eastern port of Dacca (Jehangirnagar) on the Meghna River, already a centre of considerable trade, but a century later it was brought back to a new site even more important economically, not far from Rajmahal, by the Nawab Murshid Kuli Khan. This new capital, Murshidabad, was built upon the banks of the Ganges. It consisted of two towns, one on either bank, the royal quarter and palace being on the east. A mile or so away to the southward, among villages of weavers, the town of Kasimbazar grew into a great trading centre, and was one of the first to which the English adventurers were attracted. Most of the ancient capitals of Bengal proper have become insignificant or fallen into complete ruin, and the same fate has overtaken such capitals of the provinces as Bihar,[2] Purnea, and Tirhut, while river and ocean ports chosen for economic reasons, such as Patna and Dacca inland, Cuttack and Balasore in Orissa and Chittagong on the coast, increased in importance with the coming of the foreign trader, and have survived all political changes.

[1] For treaty between E. I. Company and Armenians *vide House of Commons Reports*, vol. iii, p. 283: '... the Armenian Nation shall now, and at all Times hereafter, have equal Share and Benefit of all Indulgences this Company have or shall at any Time hereafter grant to any of their own Adventurers, or other English Merchants whatsoever.'

[2] *Vide* Tieffenthaler, p. 415.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

The cities of the Moguls were surrounded by mud or brick walls with forts, occasionally of stone: the gates were closed at sunset and guarded by peons or foot-soldiers. The walls of Gaur were twelve miles in circumference and broad enough for a chariot to pass upon them. The houses were of mud, poor and dirty, and the streets cramped and crooked except such main avenues as led from the river to the palace or temple, and to the bazar or open mart where all sales must be effected. It was the Kotwal who had charge of such matters, watched and patrolled the town at night, kept a register of the houses and frequented roads, and united the citizens for purposes defence and common welfare. He divided the city into quarters under the care of his subordinates, who reported to him daily and should also have spies at work to keep him informed of any evil brewing. A serai was to be provided for travellers, who would thus be under observation and easy to control; a cemetery too was ordered by Akbar to be constructed on the west. The Kotwal had the regulation of trade. Artificers were to be grouped under a master, prices were fixed by the Kotwal at a reasonable level, and he must see that no evasions occurred through sales being effected beyond his purview. He was permitted to levy a cess on certain prescribed traffic, arms, horses, elephants, cattle, &c., and had to see that the lowest castes were segregated. The police of the city were at his disposition and he was expected to co-operate with the Faujdar, the Zemindar, or Raja. Any expense incurred by these rulers in their various capacities was considered a first charge on the proceeds of cesses, fines, or revenue payments, and from such sources the salaries of these officers would be deducted before the net receipts of the district were made over by the Diwan to the Nawab's treasury.

Over the whole of this vast community of Bengal, rural, industrial, and mercantile, the Nawab was by the year 1750 the only effectual ruler. It is true that the Mogul continued to grant sanads, but his authority was merely traditional and nominal at that date, though it was freely used as a screen under which all parties found it convenient to hide their advancing pretensions; this was more particularly true of the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

rival European settlers. But while the Mogul retained the right of making grants of territory or official appointments to the provinces, all other powers over Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa were vested in the Nawab: he could conclude treaties, make war or peace, issue coinage, and levy taxes. His revenue was mainly derived from the farm or Diwani of the province, which included the taxes from the land and the dues from trade. He only remitted a fixed sum to the Emperor as tribute, retaining the rest as a provision for the expenses of his government and the upkeep of his own establishment. Under Akbar, Bengal contributed nearly fifteen crores of rupees, or one-sixth of the revenue of the Empire, but a century later at the death of Aurangzeb the Nawab Murshid Kuli Khan was only remitting one crore, fifty-two lacs. Yet he is said to have been in special favour at Delhi because he sent more than any of his predecessors. In 1750 Ali Vardi Khan paid a revenue of only forty lacs, with a similar sum as peshkash (i. e. honorarium), and by 1765 Shah Alam was glad to accept twenty-six lacs from Mir Jafar with the East India Company as guarantor. That much of the difference between these sums went into the coffers of the Nawabs may be gathered from contemporary writers. Ali Vardi is said to have collected from the Zemindars 'a considerable nuzziranah' (i. e. present), and exacted from them, in the name of the Emperor, a peshkash amounting to twice the sum that he actually remitted to Delhi on that account, and Charles Stewart says of him, 'It does not appear that he actually remitted any part of the revenue to Dehly'.[1] On the other hand, the expenses of government were reduced to a minimum, for every officer and agent was expected to make his office pay its own upkeep. The Royroyan, the Faujdar, and the Zemindar looked to the proceeds of fines in the courts or cesses on the inhabitants of their districts to provide their own salary and that of their assistants, the pay of police, hircarrahs, or peons.

The Nawab's army seems to have consisted of two distinct parts. His Nazim levied a compact body of household or royal troops, and this was supplemented in time of war by the

[1] Gladwin, *Narrative of Transactions in Bengal*, p. 175.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

contingents of the Zemindars, Jagirdars, &c. For the most part both the size and efficiency of the military force depended on the ability of the particular Nawab to control his Rajas, Jagirdars, and Zemindars. Their contingents were probably composed for the most part of Hindus, though no Bengalis took arms, but the Nawab's own troops had a larger element of Mogul or Mahomedan men and were mostly mercenaries, including Persians, Pathans, Afghans, adventurers of all kinds. It was this mercenary character of the troops all over India that made the English conquest comparatively easy. As Sir Alfred Lyall has pointed out, they cared little or nothing for their leaders, were ready to change sides on the least excuse, and would tolerate little discipline. Ferishta gives an account of Kasim's troops commanded by an Armenian called Gregory or Goorgeen Khan:

'This man was universally hated by the troops for his severity and pride. He had introduced the English discipline, and wanted like them to keep up the same order and respect in time of distress as of good fortune, never considering that they possess qualities peculiar to themselves, which enable them to maintain such order over their servants at all times. He had the presumption to flatter himself that an Armenian, always used to trade, could oblige strangers to submit to a discipline they had never been accustomed to.'[1]

In Hoey's *Memoirs of Faizabad* there is an account of the army of Oudh at a time when the power of that province was considerable and might be held to be equivalent to that of Bengal in normal times. He names nine chief officers, of whom 'none had less than 1,000 or 500 horsemen; besides these there were eunuchs and their novices, private slaves', a Khan commanding two divisions, i. e. '14,000 regulars who wore red coats'. Other contingents are: 1,000 irregular lancers and one line regiment of infantry; 500 horse and one regiment of infantry; two levies of 500 horse and four infantry regiments; three bodies of 500 irregulars, both horse and foot; and he adds, 'the artillery passes reckoning', and gives the total as 80,000 regulars and 40,000 irregulars.[2]

[1] Scott's *Ferishta*, p. 426.

[2] Hoey, *Memoirs of Faizabad*, p. 7.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

The Commander-in-Chief of the forces in Bengal was the Naib Nazim. He was appointed by the Nawab and owed direct allegiance to no other; but no doubt use was made of the Mogul's overlordship when a pretext was desired for resisting the Nawab's will. By virtue of the military resources at his command, the Nazim had all coercive authority to deal with crime. He presided in the highest criminal court at the capital, the Sudder Faujdari, or Court of Criminal Appeal, and his subordinates, the Faujdars, acted as chiefs of police in each district or chuckla, with Thanadars or serjeants under them in the parganas. A Court of Faujdari Adalut was set up in each district, with a right of appeal to the Sudder at Murshidabad, and originally the Faujdar presided in it and was responsible for the order and security of the pargana. In effecting this he was supported by the Zemindar, Jagirdar, or Talukdar, much as the Justice of the Peace reinforces the authority of the chief constable, and each officer might be utilized as a check upon the other. There was thus in theory, by the original Mogul plan, a double series of courts and officers, the civil under the Diwans, the criminal under the Faujdars. In both it was necessary to allow Hindu as well as Mahomedan law: Brahmins declared the practice of the former in disputed cases, while the Mufti expounded the latter, and the Kazi gave sentence.

The seat of government was at Murshidabad; affairs were transacted at the royal palace, the Chehelsetoon (Hall of One Hundred Pillars), the adjacent Diwan Khaneh (Hall of Audience), and the Khalsa. The revenue collections were begun each year upon an auspicious day, known as the Pooniah. This was selected originally by Murshid Kuli Khan in the beginning of the month 'Baisakh' (late April and early May), and was the occasion of a ceremonial court or durbar, when all great officials had to attend. Such durbars were held periodically: the Nawab presided from the 'masnad' or state cushion to give audience to ambassadors, petitioners, or 'wakils' (delegates), to grant 'sanads' or receive tribute: he would be surrounded by Mahomedan princes, Hindu Rajas of note, his Nazim, Diwan, and Royroyan, with shroffs,

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

scribes, and kazis in attendance. His court swarmed with pensioners of various ranks, in addition to the officers, military, religious, and civil, who thronged it, and these pensioners absorbed a large proportion of the revenue.

The position of the English venturers in this native society was from the outset an anomalous one, on the one hand privileged, on the other insecure.

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER I

### Anonymous Account of Bengal

Warren Hastings's MSS., *British Museum*, Add. MS. 29207.

In the government of the Nabobs, the lands were for the most part let out to Zemindars; either immediately by the Nabobs themselves or else by Muttahuds to whom the charge of large districts was committed, and the Zemindars either kept them in their own hands or let them out again to under-farmers as was most agreeable to themselves. The writing executed by the Muttahuds was for a fixed sum, yet it was not understood to be an absolute engagement. They seldom met with severe usage on account of deficiencies provided they rendered a fair account of their collections, and on the other hand if they collected more than was specified in the writing, the overplus was not regarded as their own right, but was deemed to belong to Government. If either the Muttahuds or Zemindars were backward in the payment of their rents the customary methods of enforcing them were by placing peons, hircarrahs, chubdars, &c., upon their vackeels or upon themselves, who kept them under restriction and took from them very heavy daily fees till the Government's demand was satisfied; by attaching and, if necessary, confiscating their property, wherever it could be found; by imprisoning and flogging either the vackeels or the principals (sometimes though very rarely so as to cause their death); by depriving the Zemindars of the management of the lands, giving them a small allowance and taking the lands under the immediate charge of the Government; and, lastly, by depriving them totally of their Zemindaris, and giving them to other persons on their paying the deficiencies which had arisen. The Zemindars and Muttahuds exercised the same methods of

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

enforcing the collections from the petty renters and reiats by placing peons, &c., over them, confining them, seizing their effects, and flogging them.

The system now[1] pursued in the management of the revenues is to farm the lands either to the Zemindars themselves or to other persons for a specified sum, the risk and profit and loss to be theirs. In the latter case the Zemindars receive a fixed allowance in ready money and cannot be deprived of their Zemindaris for any deficiencies which may happen. The same methods are used for enforcing the collections as formerly, but in a much more moderate degree. The expense occasioned to renters by peons, &c., placed upon them is not a quarter of what it used to be. Flogging is seldom practised and never with much severity. I do not remember more than two instances the whole time I have been concerned in the revenue business. The renters, although bound by absolute engagements, have generally been indulged with deductions, when Government has been convinced that they are real sufferers. The renters have the power of finally settling in their districts such disputes as do not relate to the value of more than ten rupees. They may place peons, &c., in moderation on their under-renters and reiats, they may confine them for balances and (except the cattle, seed, and implements requisite for cultivation) may attach their effects, but they cannot inflict any corporal punishment upon them.

[1] Probably 1775.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES INDIA

# CHAPTER II

## ENGLISH SETTLEMENTS

**The first English Settlements—The Zemindari of Calcutta—The East India Company's factories, government, forces, servants. The system of trade—the Dustuk—the Private Trade abuses. Life of Hastings as a junior servant, 1750–7.**

THE East India Company's ships *Falcon* and *Hopewell* had in 1630 and 1633 visited ports in the neighbourhood of Vizagapatam and 'laid', as they reported, 'a good beginning to a future hopeful trade'. But the first English traders to settle in the eastern provinces of the Mogul Empire reached Orissa in the year 1633.

Ralph Cartwright was one of half a dozen venturers who chartered a native junk to make their way along hundreds of miles of inhospitable coast to the north-east of Masulipatam until they reached Harispur. Here they found themselves in the dominion of a Mogul officer, the Nawab of Orissa, who permitted them to settle at Balasore and higher up the river Mahanadi at Hariharapur, near Cuttack. To this point all the trade of Orissa drew; it was therefore an excellent situation for the English. The Nawab granted them complete freedom and exemption from all government dues, and finally the right of coinage.[1]

By 1651 the English had pushed on to the Ganges itself, and thanks to the influence of an Englishman, Dr. Boughton, at the Court of Shuja Sultan, the Nawab of Bengal, a factory was established at Hugli under a Mr. Bridgeman. Here they received the same privileges of freedom from all customs or dues, and soon built other factories at Patna in Bahar, at Kasimbazar, and at the old native capital of Rajmahal. Before the death of the Emperor Aurangzeb (1707) troubles occurred with the new Nawabs of Bengal, and the English realized that they could no longer rely securely on the country powers for protection. As early as 1658 they had been

[1] W. Foster, *English Factories in India, 1630–1634*, pp. xxii and xxx; C. R. Wilson's *Early Annals of the English in Bengal*, vol. i, pp. 1–17.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

compelled, on the accession of Aurangzeb, to pay a farm or tribute of 3,000 rupees for their privileges, and they never recovered the complete freedom enjoyed before, for in 1714 they were still paying this sum.[1] In 1690 Job Charnock, the leader of the English merchants, encouraged by the friendship of the Armenians and the Seths, the chief trading communities among the natives, decided, rather than abandon the river, to choose a new site and stand on the defensive. He chose the village of Didi Kalkateh (Calcutta) as a good strategic position, and built a fort on a corner of land formed by the junction of a small tributary with the Hugli.

In 1698 the new settlement secured the Zemindari of Calcutta, Sutaluti, and Govindpur, which included 383 villages.[2] The grant was made by the Nawab, but contested by the former holders, who, however, finally relinquished their claim on receipt of 1,300 rupees from the Company.[3] In virtue of this territory the East India Company assumed the guise and performed the service, for the first time, of subjects of the Mogul Empire, ranking as subordinates of the Diwani. In 1757 they acquired a second Zemindari, the twenty-four parganas reaching from Calcutta southward to Culpee, held by a grant from the new Nawab, Mir Jafar, confirmed by the Emperor Shah Alam. In this particular of holding an official capacity the Bengal Presidency differed from those of Bombay

[1] Wilson's *Early Annals of Bengal*, vol. ii, p. 276.

[2] Extract from *Old Fort William*, vol. i, p. 39, Chuttanutta (i. e. Sutaluti) Consultations, October 31, 1698:

'The Prince [i. e. the Nawab] having given us the three towns adjacent to our settlement, viz. Deculcutta, Chuttanuttee, and Govindpore, or more properly may be said the Jimmidarship of the said towns paying the same rent to the King [i. e. the Mogul] as the Jimmidars successively have done, . . . upon paying to the Jimidar (*sic*) 1,000 rupees for the same, it was agreed that the money should be paid being the best money that ever was spent for so great a priviledge but the Jimmidar making a great noise being unwilling to part with their country threatening to complain to the King of the injustice of the Prince in giving away their country which they had so long in possession.'

[3] Extract from the Deed of purchase (British Museum Add. MS. 24039, No. 39): 'Didi Kalkatah and Sutaluti within the jurisdiction of pargana Amirabad and village Gobindpur . . . to the English Company . . . bounded by the accustomed notorious and usual boundaries the same being owned and possessed by us . . . we have sold . . . in exchange for 1300 rupees.' December 30, 1699.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

and Madras. By this more intimate connexion with the native régime it was particularly suited to become the leading force in our intercourse with the Mogul Empire and gradually to assume the management of other than trading interests; its trade, too, was liable to other contingencies than theirs. The length of inhospitable coast that stretched between Madras and Calcutta exposed the ships from Bengal to special dangers from the monsoons. The most favourable seasons for the passage were spring and autumn, and thus the arrival of ships was intermittent and their departure had often to be hastened. These conditions made it necessary to purvey the cargoes for the London market before the arrival of the ships and to hold them in readiness in warehouses at the ports. Such were the Company's 'factories'. The difficulty of procuring the goods, except in special seasons and districts, early necessitated the founding of additional subordinate factories inland or some distance up the rivers to act as feeders to the export warehouses. All these settlements acquired certain rights, though none but Calcutta was a Zemindari. They were exempt from the ordinary native Government jurisdiction; native officers had no right to intrude within their boundaries, and they were permitted to garrison and even to fortify themselves. The inhabitants were not liable to be summoned before the native Courts of the Faujdar or Diwan, but complaints against them had to be preferred before their own chiefs at Calcutta. This was their head-quarters and the seat of their President and Governor. It was in 1715 that the province was erected into a Presidency on an equality with Madras and Bombay, and ten years later a Court of Justice was created, known as the Mayor's Court, to administer English justice over the community. The President governed with the aid of a Council of sixteen, and they had complete authority over all East India Company servants on the Bengal establishment, as well as other English inhabitants, who might only settle there with the permission of the Company. These were known as free merchants and received a licence from the Company for private trade: by degrees they acquired greater independence, and in the confusion that followed the English

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

victory at Plassey they even defied the power of the English courts in Bengal to restrain their arbitrary conduct. In consequence of the Charter erecting his court the Mayor of Calcutta was the supreme judge over the entire community in all parts of Bengal, to decide all disputes between whites. The President and Council were responsible for the behaviour of whites towards the natives, and to see that complaints made in the native courts were duly answered. The district factories had an organization modelled on that of Calcutta, the chief of each place governing the local community with the aid of a council of four or five members. The extreme penalty for misdeeds was expulsion from the Company's service, and this final sentence could only be pronounced by the Calcutta Government, subject to the sanction of the Court of Directors in London.

The military power of the Bengal establishment before 1757 was confined to a small defensive force. By charter the Company had the power to enlist and even to 'press' men for their military service, and they employed no King's troops. Their forces were divided into Regulars, enlisted, equipped, and paid by the Company; Militia, i.e. volunteers, European, Armenian, &c., officered by the civil servants; and a corps of Cadets, young gentlemen from England, awaiting the commission of Ensign.

In the years 1754 and 1755 there were mustered at Calcutta six companies of Regulars. One contained the following complement:

'At Calcutta:

5 Officers.
10 Non-commissioned officers.
78 Centinals [i.e. privates].
7 Centinals on lower pay.
1 Drum Major.
1 Drummer.
15 Recruits.

On command [i.e. at the country factories]:

(*a*) 1 Officer.
1 Serjeant.
7 Centinals.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

(*b*) 1 Officer.
1 Serjeant.
25 Centinals.
1 Drummer.

Total of company: 154 officers and men.'[1]

The six companies would thus represent a force of about 950 to 1,000 men. These were for the most part Europeans, though a few sepoys are noted in one of the companies; one company was composed of artillery. In the year 1756 the numbers may have been rather less, as they consisted of four companies of European infantry and one of artillery, as well as some hundreds of native soldiers.

The total numbers of the European community at this time has been approximately ascertained by careful collation of various records;[2] 700 may be taken as a moderate estimate of the civilians and a similar number for the troops, volunteers, &c., giving a rough total of 1,400 or 1,500 for the entire European community scattered up and down the country in that critical year. The Company's indentured servants formed only a minority of the civilian society. At Calcutta lists of them were drawn up annually for dispatch to England, and from these we find the totals in August 1750 to be sixty persons; in October 1754 to be seventy-four; and in September 1756 to be seventy-six.[3]

The salaries of the Civil Servants enumerated in 1750 are as follows:

| | £ |
|---|---|
| President and Governor, Mr. Dawson . . . | 200 |
| Eleven persons, chiefs, warehouse-keepers, accountants, &c., each . . . . . | 40 |
| 2 Chaplains, each . . . . . | 50 |
| 8 Senior servants, each . . . . . | 30 |
| 20 Junior servants, each . . . . . | 15 |
| 16 Junior servants, each . . . . . | 5 |

These sums appear ludicrously inadequate to maintain

[1] *Vide* (*a*) *Bengal Public Consultations*, January 27, 1754; (*b*) Innes *Bengal European Regiment*, p. 2, &c.; (*c*) Buckle's *Bengal Artillery*, pp. 5, 157; (*d*) Broome's *Bengal Army*, p. xliv.

[2] S. C. Hill, *List of Europeans in Siege of Calcutta*, 1756, pp. 1–99.

[3] *India Office Records: Bengal Civil Servants*, i, 1706–60, No. 57.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Europeans. In fact, they were an insignificant proportion of the total emoluments of a Company's servant. The Company's account with Mr. Dawson, for instance, shows him to have received in this year:

'From Salary . . . . £200, i.e. Rs. 1,600
,, Gratuity . . . . . 800
,, Batta . . . . . 300
,, Subsistence allowance . . . 12,697.8
,, Servants' wages . . . . . 6,009.12'

This amounts to Rs. 21,407.4, over £2,500. Subordinate servants received similar allowances and batta, but no gratuity.[1] It was a general complaint that the salaries were too low to enable any but the chief servants to live on their pay, and the Directors were well aware that the rest supplemented it by various means, and especially by engaging in the private trade. It was the opportunity for gain afforded by their position in the country rather than the pay of the Service itself which attracted men to India.

The extent to which the English community had penetrated

[1] Warren Hastings's receipts from the Company in 1751 were as follows:

'Mr. Warren Hastings ]Writer in Secretary's Office]

| | Rs. | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Receives out of the Cash as Salary | | | |
| £5 p. annum is . . . . | 40 | | |
| Batta 12½ p. cent. . . | 5 | | |
| | —— | 45 | |
| Receives from the Buxey monthly | | | |
| Diet Money, 20 . . . . | 240 | | |
| Washerman, 6 . . . . | 4.8 | | |
| | —— | 244 8 | |
| | | Rs. 289.8 | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| In 1753. [Assistant at Kasimbazar]: | | | |
| Mr. Warren Hastings receives Batta and | | Rs. | |
| p.c. out of the Cash as Salary £5 p.a. is | | 40 | |
| Batta 4½ p.c. . . . . | | 1.12.9 | |
| | | —— | 41.12.9 |
| Receives of the Buxey monthly Diet | | | |
| Money, 30 . . . . . | | 360 | |
| Candles, 4.2.6 . . . . . | | 49.14 | |
| | | —— | 409.14.0 |
| | | Batta | 36. 2.0 |
| | | | Rs. 487.12.9' |



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Bengal in the years preceding 1757 can be only broadly ascertained. There were the great 'Subordinates' or up-country factories of Kasimbazar, Dacca, Luckipore, Patna, Bihar, Malda, Rajmahal, Hugli, and Balasore. The country from which each of these drew its supplies of goods was termed its district, and after 1765 we find six districts enumerated, but until then there was no formal organization and the term district is used merely as a translation of the native 'circar' or 'chuckla' for a division of the country.

Of the above-named subordinates Dacca and Kasimbazar were the most important. Dacca, as the ancient capital and the centre of eastern Bengal, had a certain independence and isolation from the rest. The climatic conditions favoured the production of specially fine fabrics, and the office of chief was always given to highly experienced men, as was that of Kasimbazar.[1] This was the commercial suburb of Murshidabad, and political and diplomatic sagacity as well as good business faculties were required in its chief if he was to succeed in maintaining good relations with the Court. Patna was the most remote of the Ganges factories, being beyond the boundaries of Bengal proper and subject to the influence of events in Oudh and Bihar. A factory, early established there, was withdrawn for a time, but re-established in 1755. The special value of the district lay in its stores of saltpetre, an important article of the export trade. Luckipore was a centre of the trade of eastern Bengal; it was situated on the mouth of the Meghna River. Each of these subordinate factories had offshoots, called 'aurungs', in charge of a clerk or 'writer'. These were the places of manufacture of the silk and cotton cloths, &c. The term is derived from the Persian 'aurang', and meant merely the village or place where the weaver worked, but it came to be used for the Company's 'godown' or warehouse and office for the purchase of goods. The duty of a servant in charge of an aurung was to estimate the producing power of the neighbourhood, and advise his chief of the prospects there; to advance money to

[1] For defences of Kasimbazar, *vide Indian Record Series: Bengal*, vol. iii, p. 329.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

workmen through the agency of 'gomastahs' or native bailiffs; to collect the goods and forward them to the nearest factory. There they were sorted and priced according to their fineness or quality, and packed in bales for dispatch to the port. The servants at a factory consisted of a chief, a warehouse-keeper, an accountant or secretary, and several writers: one man might hold two or three offices together, being councillor, writer, and storekeeper, or having charge of an aurung. Similarly it was possible for members of the Calcutta Council to be occupied with other duties, and even to hold the chiefship at a distant factory. This practice led to grave abuses, for the work at the Council Board was neither attractive nor well paid in comparison with the scope afforded by a district chiefship, and it was consequently neglected by the senior servants, who alone had the experience of affairs that it required. Raw juniors replaced them at the Board with results disastrous to the policy and the well-being of the Presidency.

The trade which formed the *raison d'être* of this community was an export trade, concerned with the exchange of European for Bengal commodities. From England came woollens, broadcloth, velvets, carpets, hardware, metals, guns, furniture, and other manufactures to be sold at 'outcry' in Calcutta. The return cargoes consisted of the silk and cotton cloths and muslins, embroideries, shawls of Bengal and northern India, saltpetre from Patna, pepper and other spices, gums and resins, porcelain and tea from China, ivory and precious stones. In addition to the western trade there was an active traffic eastwards, carrying Indian opium, betel-nut, and grain to the Straits and islands, to China and Japan. The provision of exports for Europe was known technically as 'the investment', since it involved large advances of money to the purchasing and contracting agents. No universal method of purveyance had been adopted by 1757 in all three Presidencies. The Court of Directors were divided as to the merits of two rival systems which had been practised at different times and places. These were the so-called Gomastah system and that of the 'Dadni' merchants. Both these terms are used for middlemen, and it is not easy at every point

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

to distinguish between them. The main distinction appears to have been that the gomastah was financed by the Company—acted as their accredited agent and received a salary; while the dadni merchant was an independent native trader, dealing on his own account and taking all risks himself, merely selling the finished goods to the Company. A third term, 'Deloll', seems to be applied indifferently to either class. The necessity for their employment arose partly from the English ignorance of the language, partly from the extreme poverty of the producing classes. The ryot was a weaver or winder rather than a husbandman, according to the caste in which he was born and the natural products of his district; but so narrow was the common margin of subsistence that he could rarely afford to purchase the raw materials or the implements of his craft except by borrowing. Here the gomastah or the dadni merchant intervened, supplying either goods or money in return for an agreement by which the cloths were pledged to him or to his employers on their completion. The word 'dadni' means 'advance', and the term was applied to any merchant who made such advances out of his own resources, whether he were a native or European. The gomastah system was the one most commonly practised in Bengal in the early days. Usually a native gomastah was employed. But there were objections to them. The gomastahs constantly abused their position and the authority of the Company to oppress the weavers and to speculate on their own account, even disposing of the Company's goods to other traders. They forced contracts upon the ryot, will he, nill he; for when a piece of cloth was finished, if not before, the price had often been consumed in subsisting the weaver and his family, and he had no resource but to enter into a fresh agreement on the contractor's own terms. A constant device for raising these was to depreciate the finished cloth. The stuffs were made to 'musters' or patterns of specified quality, and if the standard was not reached in a given piece the gomastah lowered the price correspondingly. But the judge of quality was the buyer's agent, the 'jachandar' or valuer. He and the gomastah combined to settle the price when the cloth was brought to the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Company's storehouse. Often the price was fixed at fifteen per cent. and sometimes as much as forty per cent. below what it would have been in the open market, and so these officials reduced the weaver to practical slavery at sweated work.[1] If the native tried to sell the cloth, already contracted for, to others who offered him a fairer price, the Company's authority was employed, peons were set over him to watch the progress of the work and prevent such a sale, and the gomastah would even cut the piece out of the loom, when it approached completion, and carry it off to the 'khattah' or warehouse. Such high-handed treatment of the weavers was one objection to the gomastah method, though it told superficially at least in the Company's favour, by providing cloths below market price. A second objection, and one which appealed more directly to the Company's pockets, was the gomastah's readiness to cheat his employers. He diverted the goods into other hands on the plea that they were not of proper quality for the Company's investment, or that the weaver had fallen into arrears and failed to supply the full tale of his contract, and his accounts of the money advanced through him were no clearer than that of the goods rendered. Yet the objections to the dadni system were as great or greater. This method was in vogue in Bengal in the years immediately before 1770; its effect seemed to be to enhance the price of the cloths, and if the dadni merchants were less apt to oppress the ryots, the Company could not intervene to punish those who did. This method was introduced by Hastings at Madras with good effects in 1768, but his employers preferred a return to the gomastah system in Bengal.

Whether furnished by the one system or the other, the investment goods were first collected at an aurung. There the servant in charge examined them and forwarded them to the main factory of his district with an account of the cost prices. At the factory they were classified and priced for the home market and then dispatched under cover of a 'dustuk' to the port warehouse. This 'dustuk' was a frank or pass exempting the Company's wares from payment of any tolls

[1] G. W. Forrest, *Warren Hastings' Administration*, p. 15, note.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

or customs to the native Government or its agents. The early settlements had been granted complete freedom of trade for a quarter of a century, and had then been forced to pay a tribute of 3,000 rupees. In return they were granted the dustuk to cover all their own goods, whether imported or purchased in the country for export. The first sanad recording this privilege is that of Aurangzeb in 1667.[1] It was renewed by his successors, notably Farrukhsiyar in 1714 and Siraj-ud-Daula in 1756: Mir Jafar also sanctioned it. It became a source of acute contentions which can only be understood through an analysis of the various branches of trade in India.

Besides the Company's public import and export traffic between India and Europe, known as the investment, there was the private trade. The salaries of the Company's servants, not being adequate to their support, were supplemented by the permission to trade on their own account. But this private trade was confined to a traffic in goods produced and consumed within the Company's Charter sphere, i. e. from the Cape of Good Hope to the Straits of Magellan; no private trade to Europe was allowed lest it should diminish the value of the Company's monopoly. The servants exported Indian commodities on their own account to eastern ports: it was mainly the chance of making fortunes in this trade which attracted men to the service. They were allowed to use the Company's dustuk to shield their goods from paying duty in their transit down the Indian river-ways, the franks being furnished on their application by the President. The free merchants seem to have had the same privileges, but they were not allowed to settle inland, only in the ports. By 1775 the native traders had begun to imitate the dustuks or to obtain them by purchase from English individuals, and it was necessary for the authorities at Calcutta to issue regulations forbidding these practices. The Zemindars and other agents of the native Government complained that the innumerable dustuks reduced their just dues so heavily that they were unable to raise the land revenues for which they had agreed; the Nawab demanded from the President redress of these

[1] Aitcheson, *Treaties, Engagements and Sunnuds*, vol. vi, p. 222.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

grievances. An acute instance of such quarrels arose between the English factory at Kasimbazar and a native officer, named Huckem Beg, in 1755. This man appears to have held a lease of the local custom-houses or 'chowkies' from the Nawab, and threatened to put a stop to the factory's operations unless the dues which he claimed on the wares brought to them were paid. In January 1756 the Company, while continuing to deny his right, yielded so far as to pay him a sum of Rs. 12,000 to secure their future freedom. To meet possible future claims they ordered their official registrar to keep a record of the dustuks issued to every servant; these were to be inspected every six months. The disputes seem, however, to have continued, for Mr. Holwell cites, as one of the articles contained in Siraj-ud-Daula's demands in camp at Kasimbazar in June, 1756, 'That we should not misuse the liberty of our dustuk by covering the trade of the native merchants. And that we should refund and make good whatever sum it should be proved the king had been defrauded of in his revenues and duties by this practice.' This abuse undoubtedly contributed to provoke Siraj-ud-Daula to the ensuing attack on Calcutta, and Huckem Beg's actions may be traced throughout the spring, inflaming the mind of his master on one pretext after another,[1] until the Nawab's jealousy culminated in his capture of Calcutta and the destruction of the English prisoners in the Black Hole.

Another abuse, the intervention of the English in the inland trade, only arose after the power had passed into English hands. For Europeans to partake in this trade was illicit, and it was condemned by the Directors as soon as they became aware of the practice, but it was not easily rooted out.[2]

The slight records of the early years of Warren Hastings in India excellently illustrate the condition of the English merchant in Bengal before the date of the battle of Plassey. He left England in 1749, a lad of seventeen, fresh from Westminster School and a few weeks' mercantile training, and reached Bengal, July 16, 1749. For the first two years he served

[1] *India Office Records*, Range I. 28, pp. 592, 675, &c. [2] *Vide* p. 50.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

at Calcutta as a writer in the secretary's office. A vivid account of the kind of life that went on inside one of the Company's export dépôts in that century is given in Fryer's description of Bombay.[1] It would be a very sound knowledge of practical trade that Hastings would learn in such a place and among such cunning dealers and an insight into human nature not at its best. He seems at once to have set to work to learn the language, for in 1755 he was able to conduct an inquiry into the possibilities of trade in an up-country district, and in 1757 he was charged with a mission to the native Court, where Persian was spoken. It is characteristic of the man that he emerged from twenty years of such work and intercourse with Hindus and Mussulmans of all ranks, inspired with a genuine liking for, and interest in, the natives and free from the loud, overbearing manner considered indispensable by the Claverings, Bolts, Gorings, and Reeds, his contemporaries. He reaped a reward of the greatest value to him throughout his career, in the confidence and regard with which the natives repaid his trust in them, from the Nawab Kasim Ali down to the meanest coolie. By 1753 Hastings had been sent up the river as Assistant at Kasimbazar.[2] To experience of the work at the main export settlement he thus added a knowledge of the methods of collecting, sorting, and pricing the investment goods at the subordinate factories for transit to Calcutta. The records of this factory for some months were in his charge; copies of them are among the India Office records, and are signed here and there in his bold hand.[3] His

[1] 'Here they live in shipping-time in a continual hurly-burly, the Banyans [native middlemen] presenting themselves from 10 in the morning to 12 and then in the afternoon at 4 till night, as if it were an exchange in every row; below stairs packers and warehouse keepers together with merchants bringing and receiving musters make a mere Billingsgate, for if you make not a noise they hardly think you intent on what you are doing. . . . As soon as you have set foot on shore they [the Banyans] crowd in their service, interposing between you and all civil respect as if you had no other business than to be gulled. They are the absolute map of sordidness, enduring servilely foul words, affronts, and injuries for a future hope of gain. Their whole desire is to have money pass through their fingers. As for their dealings in the world they are well-skilled and will arithmetize the nicest fractions without help of pen and ink, much given to traffic and intelligent in the way of merchandize if not fraudulent.'—Fryer, *Travels in Persia and Hindostan*, p. 214.

[2] *India Office Records: Bengal Civil Servants*, No. 1.
*India Office Factory Records: Kasimbazar.*

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

chief, William Watts, was one of the most able and prominent of the Company's senior servants. He recognized the ability of his new subordinate, and on October 25, 1755, Hastings was promoted to a place on the factory council, then to the posts of secretary and storekeeper. But within a fortnight the Calcutta Council gave permission to the factory to send one of their servants to inspect a district across the Pudda River,[1] known as the Putney Aurungs. Here many villages of weavers were established in a region apt to be inundated by floods, and on that account the more secure from inundations of human marauders. The peasants were occupied in growing silk, which they sold in the cocoons or spun and wove into cloths of fine quality. Hastings was selected for this mission and left Kasimbazar on November 21, 1755, entrusted with the considerable sum of Rs. 10,000, so that he might take all opportunities that offered of purchasing the Novemberbund or new crop of raw, unwound silk called Putney. In a week's time he made his first report from a place called Chuncaparra, sending patterns of the silk produced in the last two months. He then moved on, making inquiries and purchases, and finally selecting a place called Powa[2] as a suitable centre for the Company to establish an aurung for the winding of raw silk. This was done, and the number of men employed appears to have been considerable, amounting with those in the Company's service at Kasimbazar to 1,400. Hastings's last letter from this district is dated January 12, 1756. From February there is a sudden breach in the Kasimbazar records. On June 24 Siraj-ud-Daula captured the factory on his march towards Calcutta, and no doubt destroyed the ledgers of the last four months. There is no mention of Hastings in the

[1] The Pudda is not marked on Rennell's map. There are references to it in vol. iii of S. C. Hill's *Indian Record Series: Bengal*, p. 301, and its position is explained by Tieffenthaler in his account of Bengal, p. 438, in these terms: 'le grand Gange, qui prend son cours vers Dacca, s'appelle Padda ou Paddauvati.' The great and lesser Ganges branches divide at a place called Kasihathi, fourteen miles from Murshidabad. The Little Ganges, which flows down to Calcutta, is called Bhagirathi. *Vide* Thornton's *Gazetteer*, 'Ganges'.

[2] *Indian Office Factory Records: Kasimbazar*, Dec. 14, 1755. This Powa is probably a village near Rampora or Rampur Boalia to which place Hastings expressed the intention of moving from Cnuncaparra in a letter dated Nov. 28, 1755.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

accounts of the surrender of the place. He himself states that he was imprisoned at Murshidabad, and this may be explained by the fact that he had been ordered thither by the Calcutta Council on February 16. A dispute had arisen between the Company's men and some native officials, who, it was hoped, might be acting without the knowledge of their Government. Hastings, already proficient in Persian, the diplomatic language of the East Indies, was sent with a colleague to attend the Durbar, demand a private audience of the Nawab, and put the English case before him.[1] It seems probable that this matter detained him at the capital until Siraj-ud-Daula's quarrel with the English broke out, when those at hand would be the first secured. Even if Hastings had already returned to the aurungs before the Nawab's advance upon Kasimbazar, he would still lie in the enemy's path.[2] Certainly he was detained at the capital during the captivity of Holwell and his fellow survivors of the Black Hole tragedy. Hastings enjoyed more favourable treatment than they. He was allowed to go at large and lived in the Dutch factory, whence he was able to intercede for the prisoners and to procure some alleviations of their plight. How came he to receive such favours? Some light is thrown on this question by words of his written six years later in an attempt to persuade his employers to put reliance in native officials: 'As I have formerly lived among the country people in a very inferior station, at a time when we were subject to the most slavish dependence on the Government, and met with the greatest indulgence and even respect from the Zemindars and officers of the Government, I can with the greatest confidence deny the justice of this opinion' [viz. that no power can safely be trusted in their hands].[3] Hastings was evidently tactful in his relations both with Dutch rivals and with the natives. He treats them fairly and respects their susceptibilities, and he is not disappointed in the response they make. The importance

[1] *India Office Bengal Imp. Press List*, 1756, Minutes of Consultations, Fort William, February 15.

[2] 'The other European factories, where Messrs. Hastings and Marriott, who had been absent at some of the aurangs, also found refuge after being plundered of all they possessed.'—*Indian Record Series: Bengal in 1756*, p. lx.

[3] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. iii, p. 486; *Bengal Public Cons.* Range I. 33, March 1, 1763.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

of this attitude can hardly be over-estimated. It is largely due to this that he acquired such influence in Bengal, both with his superiors and at the Court of the Nawab, as to be appointed Resident there after the troubles, and it was the experience so acquired that caused the Directors to turn to him in 1771 as the one man who could extricate Bengal from the confusion into which it had fallen. This attitude underlay Hastings's later policy: in revenue collection, in trade, in customs regulations, and in policing the country he relied mainly on native co-operation and sought systematically to develop native modes of law and control rather than to substitute for them our foreign methods.

The autumn of 1756 was a critical season for the English in Bengal, and afforded Hastings the opportunity of his life. The Calcutta refugees were clinging to their last hold in the Province, Fulta, a village in the Twenty-four Parganas, but were cut off from supplies, which the natives dared not bring them. In this extremity their leaders, Major Killpatrick, Messrs. Drake, Watts, and Holwell, besought the Dutch to appeal on their behalf.[1] The Dutch referred them to Hastings, who was then at Kasimbazar, not daring themselves to promote the restoration of their rivals. Hastings was then entrusted with a letter for the Nawab. He failed to get access to him, but presented it to the Diwan Amedroy, and was so far successful in his negotiations that a market for provisions was opened at Fulta and the Nawab ordered the 'restoration of all that had been taken from the English', and this notwithstanding that 'the English were never mentioned but with pity or contempt', as Hastings himself had reported only a month earlier. Until October Hastings continued to send constant advices of the condition of affairs at Court, but on the 20th he found it advisable to take flight to Chinsurah and so rejoined his own people before the arrival of Clive's relieving force of 900 Europeans and 1,500 sepoys from Madras. His intimate knowledge of the Nawab's situation made him of essential value in Clive's councils, and he accompanied the forces as a volunteer to the recapture of Calcutta and in the later advance to Plassey.

[1] *India Office Records*, Range A. 1, September 20, 1756.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER II

### FACTORY RECORDS: KASIMBAZAR

### I.

*To Mr. Warren Hastings.* *Cossimbuzar, November 21, 1755.*

Sir,—Agreable to the President & Council's permission for sending one of our Board to the Putney Aurungs, We direct that you make the best of your Way to those on the other side of the Pudda, where you are to get the best information you can of the present prices of the Various kinds of Putney at the several places; and inform us thereof, sending to us at the Same time Musters of Such Sorts as you think properest for producing Silk agreable to our Honble. Masters' Directions in the last List of Investment, Coppy whereof we hereunto annex, you must likewise Endeavour to learn what Quantity of Novemberbund is likely to be produced & what purchasers are there & expected, & give us every other information you can, whereby we may Judge whether the Price is likely to rise or fall.

As we shall have an immediate occasion for a Quantity of Putney we give into your Charge 10,000 Rupees, which you must invest in Such as you think will produce (when wound off) Silk equal to the Musters we Send with you.

As to the rest We must leave it to your Directions [? Discretion] to act in Such a manner as the Various Circumstances Shall require & as you may Esteem most Elegible for our Honble. Masters' Interest.

We wish you Success in your undertakings and are Sir

Your loving friends & Servants

WM. WATTS & Co.

### II.

*To the Worshipful William Watts, Esq.*

Chief etc. etc. Council at Cossimbuzar

Worshl Sir & Sirs,—Herewith I send you musters of 6 Letter'd raw silk wound off from Some Mullock Putney of about equal fineness with the 2 head Musters wh. I lately sent for your Inspection. If this meets your approval I will make a further tryall with the 5 Letter'd. The following Calculation will shew what the whole Charges in winding etc. will amount too & likewise the price of each letter.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Viz. | Prime cost | 6. 5. | 3 |
| | Contingent charges | 1. | 6 |
| | Sum wd Rups | 6. 7. | 0 |
| | Difference of batta supposed 3.2 % | 3. | 9 |
| | Sicca Rs | 6. 3. | 3 |
| | Batta 4½ % cent. | 4. | 6 |
| | Dell Rs | 6. 7. | 9 |
| | Rs | | |
| | Charges winding off 14 p pud is p Rs | 5. | 7 |
| | The Whole Amt p seer | 6. 13. | 4 |

[Details of Investment policy follow.]

. . . To this I might likewise add that no Troubles of the Government ever affect this country in the same Degree as they are felt at Cossimbuzar, whether tis owing to the Breadth & Difficulty of passing the Pudda, The Distance from the Metropolis, or from whatever Cause it may proceed, This place being looked upon as a Safe assylum from Public Dangers as is evident from the Multitudes of Winders, Weavers etc that fled hither in the time of the Morattas, & to avoid the Exactions of Kissen Deb & on other occasions . . . I am

Worshipl Sir and Sirs

Your most obedient

& most humble Servant

WARREN HASTINGS.

Entered after Consultations on Jan. 4, 1756.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

# CHAPTER III

## 1757 TO 1772

**Effects of Plassey—English all-powerful—A veiled revolution—Dustuks abused—Inland trade usurped—Nawabs powerless—Clive's second administration—The nominal Diwani—Irresponsibility of the dual authorities—Successful experiments.**

THE story of the years that followed upon Clive's victory at Plassey falls into two natural divisions, from 1757 to 1765, and from 1765 to 1772. The first is the period of unorganized English power in Bengal; the second that of Clive's unhappy attempt at organization known as the dual system of government. The first opens a new epoch in the relations of England with India, and opens it badly; the second makes bad worse.

Up to the point of Siraj-ud-Daula's defeat, the English in Bengal, as in Madras and Bombay, had paid obedience to the native rulers. They had been in the main favoured above other subjects, both native and European, on account of the wealth they brought and the impetus they gave to the trade of the country. Yet they had been in Bengal on sufferance and by virtue of grants which might be annulled whenever they should affront a powerful Nawab. Fortunately for English interests Siraj-ud-Daula had been unpopular; he was hated for his folly, vice, and cruelty; it was the intrigues of his rival, Mir Jafar, as much as the British arms, that overthrew him. After their victory the English were in the position of arbiters between the two factions and retained all real power in their own hands. By the treaty made with Mir Jafar in 1757 they became the masters of Bengal, in fact though not in name, for they alone had reliable troops sufficient to enforce their will. By the terms of this treaty the Company gave a general pledge of assistance as follows:

'Article XIII.—That we will assist Mir Jaffier Khan Bahadur with all our force, to obtain the Soubahship of the Provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa; and further that we will

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

assist him to the utmost against all his enemies whatsoever.' [1]

In return they were to receive the confirmation to them of the Zemindari and the Twenty-four Parganas, the French factories were to be given up, ten million rupees were promised as compensation to the Company, five million to the English inhabitants, two million to the Indians, and 700,000 to the Armenians. The grant of the dustuk was also confirmed, with these striking additions: 'Whoever acts contrary to these orders, the English have full power to punish them. When the English Company desire to settle a new factory you are to give them 40 begahs of the King's land.' These two clauses alone are enough to show that the English no longer relied on the Nizamut or native Government to see justice done, but themselves compelled obedience to their claims. In fact, the effect of Plassey was to reverse for good the positions of the English Company and the native Government. In theory the Company held no legal status, formed no integral part of the Mogul Empire, and were in name no more than Zemindars of a small district round Calcutta; in fact they held the power to interfere at will in any matter whether military or civil, and to compel the Nawab's officers, from the Nazim downwards, to enforce their wishes. Their reason for not openly assuming the government was a dread of provoking their European rivals. The Diwani or charge of the revenue and virtual control of the Government was offered to Clive by the Emperor's Vizier in 1759 (*vide* p. 67), and he recognized that it was 'a fair opportunity of making the Company all in all'. He would probably have accepted it, but for his employers' fears of the jealousy it might arouse and because of the need it would involve of larger forces than he could at the moment induce them to send him. The Directors wished to avoid all outward show of authority and all cares of administration while they securely enjoyed the ability to exploit Bengal: but it is only fair to them to remember that they were not alive to the decayed condition of the native rule.

[1] *India Office Records*, Abstract Coast and Bay, No. 1, p. 187, paragraph 83.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

None the less, without the name of any formal change, the state of the country underwent a complete revolution. The Company had no administrative organization; to create one would have been to encroach openly on the Nawab's sphere of action. The power of the English Company up and down the provinces was exercised as before by their servants, mere clerks and factors, who were, in all that related to government, alike untrained and uncontrolled, but backed now, whenever they chose to interfere in it, by strong military forces. The Hindu, practised in changing masters, quickly recognized this informal revolution and promptly paid court to the new power. Each English factor and Resident found himself the sovereign in his own district, sought and flattered by traders and Zemindars, and all kinds of abuses arose, especially in the private trade.

The registration of dustuks, ordered just before the war, had lapsed or proved insufficient, and in January 1758 a further step was taken to prevent their misuse by natives. A peon or foot-soldier was dispatched with each frank to accompany the goods and see that the permit was returned in due course to be cancelled by the President, a special fee of five rupees being charged for this service.[1] Yet the abuse evidently continued, judging by the following extract from the Calcutta Proceedings of December 29, 1758: 'Such restrictions are laid on the privilege as 'tis hoped will prevent the Company's servants covering the property of others and defrauding the Government of its just duties.'[2] Indeed, almost every page of the Company's correspondence during the years 1759 to 1764 bears evidence that the dustuk was in the hands of natives. Some were *bona fide* agents of the Company or of their servants, but even these perverted it to their own private uses, while many were independent traders who had usurped the privilege. All equally disputed the claim of the Nawab's subordinates to custom dues, and the revenues of Mir Jafar and his successors suffered in proportion.

But a worse evil had arisen and one which increased the

[1] *India Office Records*, Abstract Coast and Bay, No. 1, January 10, 1758, paragraph 97.

[2] Ibid., p. 339.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

opportunities for the first. This was the intervention of Europeans in a branch of trade to which they had no right, the inland trade. The investment and private trade were both branches of export trade, but the inland was a traffic in commodities produced and consumed within Bengal, and consisting for the most part of such necessaries as salt, grain, betel-nut, and tobacco. It had hitherto been entirely in the hands of natives, and its retail formed one of the main sources of profit to the poorer sort. The grants made to the Company gave them no right to share in it, nor could their servants justly claim rights denied to the masters. Only the collapse of the power of the Nizamut made it possible for Englishmen to take up this trade, and the fact that between 1757 and 1760 they began to do so is evidence that Mir Jafar was unable to maintain due authority. For Europeans merely to enter this trade was in itself an abuse, but not content to compete in the open market they used their privileged position under the English flag to procure a practical monopoly. Few natives dared to dispute the trade with them, and those who did were soon worsted, for the dustuk enabled the European to procure supplies at half the cost incurred by his rival. In many cases the price of the commodities depended less on the cost of production than on the high rates paid in transit at the innumerable chowkies. As the number of merchants liable to pay decreased, the rate of the tolls was often raised to make up the usual 'farm', and thus the native was doubly mulcted while the Englishman's wares passed free. Arrived at the market, the Hindu looked to recoup himself by asking a higher price than formerly, and the Englishman could thus afford to undersell him and yet keep his own price above the original market rates. The result was that the English traders could at once choke out the native competitor and yet charge famine prices to the wretched consumer. Their commanding influence further enabled them to force their goods on the country people at their own prices, 'selling goods by Force for more than the current Market price: A Practice called in this country Barja, or Guchavut'.[1]

[1] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. ii, p. 293.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

These abuses were enhanced and complicated by the unwarranted spread of the uncovenanted European traders or free merchants. Once confined to the ports, these men had now penetrated all parts of the country, prosecuting the private trade for which they held the Company's licence, and also following the Company's servants in their invasion of the inland trade, and in many cases acting as their accredited agents in both. Owing no direct responsibility to the Calcutta authorities, they found it even easier than the covenanted servants to evade control or detection in their malpractices, and brought much discredit on the Company's name, since the Hindu could not well discriminate between these two classes.

By these practices not only the native Government was defrauded of its dues from large volumes of trade, but its poorer subjects were reduced to ruin. Mir Jafar's reign saw the general adoption of the inland trade by Englishmen [1] as well as the abuse of the dustuk, although it was not until Mir Kasim's accession that these grievances were made generally known to the chiefs of the Company at home. From 1760 onwards they formed the main topic of constant disputes in the Council's correspondence with the Nawab, and at the Calcutta Board itself, while the temper of the English merchants grew more and more insolent and insubordinate. Free merchants and covenanted servants made common cause against any attempt to regulate their conduct or check their rapacity, and the majority of the Councillors upheld practices in which they themselves were interested. Clive's successor in the Presidency, Vansittart, was himself an honourable man, but failed to stem the tide of corruption, as the following extracts from the Public Consultations of the Board on May 3, 1764, may serve to show:

'Every method has been tried for carrying on the inland trade upon such a footing as to prevent disputes between our Agents and the Country Government or between one Agent

[1] The historian Mill says that duties were paid until Kasim's accession, and no doubt the impotence of the Nizamut would not be fully realized till then, but the absence of complaints in the years from 1757 to 1760 is more likely to have been due to Jafar's weakness and reluctance to present them.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

and another; and for deciding in a just and reasonable Manner such as might unavoidably happen. Having experienced the Obstructions to which that Trade would be liable, if the Officers of the Country Government were admitted to any authority over the English Agents, it was resolved in Consultations of 5th of March, 1763, that the chief of the nearest English Factory should finally determine all such Disputes, and as the Rungpore, Dinagepore, and adjacent Districts, where a very considerable part of the Inland Trade centres, appeared to be too far removed from any of our Factories to admit of any such Enquiry being made in a satisfactory Manner, for this Reason principally it was agreed, that a Senior Servant should be appointed to reside at Rungpore, who should have Power to hear and determine all Disputes.

'No sooner is this Resolution carried into Practice, than some of the English Agents complain as loudly of injuries suffered from the Authority of the English Agent as they did before of the Nabob's Government.

'Shall there then be no Government, no Restraint upon those excesses, which either Ignorance, Passion, or Self-Interest may lead an English Agent to commit in the Country? This is really the case at present. Our Charter does not authorize our Courts to take cognizance of any crimes they might commit in these parts; and it has been laid down as a fundamental principle that the Country Government shall have no power of them. We need not look further for the root of that Licentiousness.'[1]

The remedy attempted was to command that 'All Europeans, Portuguese Natives, and Armenian Agents, who are now up the country shall have notice given them to settle their concerns so as to return to Calcutta by November 3rd next; and that after that Time no European shall be permitted to go up the country under any Pretext whatever or any other agents be employed in our Trade but Bengal Natives'.[1] But this was by no means a satisfactory measure: the Bengal gomastahs and native banyans had in many instances been the instigators of the abuses, acting for English masters, ignorant of the local customs and easily persuaded that their privileges were in danger. The English agents found it easy to point to instances of insolent and oppressive behaviour on the part of the banyans, and argued that they were without

[1] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. ii, p. 293.

the most elementary notions of justice and fair dealing, and unfit for such trust. The commands, though reinforced by the orders of the Directors, proved a dead letter.

In this way the period from 1757 to 1765 became the darkest in our Indian history: English corruption and greed on the one hand, and the impotence of the Indian officials on the other, led to incessant friction, open hostility, and repeated revolutions of the native Government, managed by the Company's influence. Mir Jafar, Clive's puppet Nawab, was first deposed in 1760 as being too weak to conduct the government and defence of the country satisfactorily. He was unwise, too, in his treatment of the native princes, and roused opposition by deposing Hindu grandees in favour of Mahomedan newcomers. His Zemindars openly defied his authority, withheld their revenues, and refused to send contingents to his army, while they complained bitterly of the encroachments of the English. His successor, Mir Kasim Ali, on the other hand, was chastised for proving too strong (*vide* p. 70) and successful in his resistance to the English fomenters of disorder, and was replaced in 1764 by the original creature, more than ever the tool of the Calcutta Council. It needed skilful statesmanship to govern by means of so feeble a one, and neither Vansittart nor his temporary successor, Spencer, was a statesman. The Company found it necessary to turn to Clive, who had been absent from India for five years, and as President of the Select Committee of the Calcutta Council now set up they entrusted him with practically dictatorial powers over the Council itself, as well as the country. In despair of agreement with the English, Kasim Ali had attacked them, had then fled to Oudh and induced the Vizier to take the field with him, the new Emperor Shah Alam being in their hands. On their defeat by Colonel Munro at Buxar in 1764 Shah Alam committed himself to the English, who proceeded to conquer parts of Oudh, taking the eastern region, Ghazipur, and the adjoining Zemindari of Balwant Sing temporarily for themselves and making over Kora and Allahabad to the Emperor.

These events in India were simultaneous with the appointment in England of Lord Clive, news of which reached Calcutta

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

on January 24, 1765. They were followed in February by the death of Mir Jafar, and the scene upon which Clive entered in May was a greatly changed one. Rehabilitated by the English alliance, the Mogul, Shah Alam, was anxious to return to Delhi, where the Afghans were in the ascendant, having shattered their rivals, the Marathas, at Paniput in 1761. The Vizier of Oudh, Shuja-ud-Daula, had been brought by his defeat and loss of territory to desire reconciliation with the English, while the Company had found its new acquisitions, the Oudh lands of Ghazipur and Benares, more burdensome than profitable. A new policy had to be evolved, and Clive's far-reaching views prevailed with the Directors. Ever since 1759 his ideal had been to acquire the real sovereignty of Bengal, and, as he then suggested to Chatham, to vest it in the Crown. While he was careful to conceal the latter aim from his employers, he urged the former successfully upon them. They determined to uphold the ancient dignity of the Mogul, and by his sanction to acquire the control of Bengal; to shut out the rival dangers of Afghan and Maratha raids by strengthening the Vizier of Oudh and using his territory as a barrier against them; and to furnish Bengal itself with so strong a force of European and Sepoy troops that the Company should remain the arbiter in all disputes. This was the cardinal point of the policy upon which the rest must hinge, and could only be successful, in the view of the Directors, if sanctioned by the supreme traditional authority, the Mogul. Clive therefore hastened to secure an interview with Shah Alam. On the death of Mir Jafar, President Spencer had installed as Nawab a young prince, Nujum-ud-Daula, with a Mahomedan minister, Mohamed Reza Khan, and an English Resident, Francis Sykes, to be joint directors of his Government.[1] To regularize this action and to secure his general policy Clive drew up a treaty with the Mogul at Allahabad, by which the Emperor granted to the English Company the office of the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa. Thus for the first time the English merchants became members of the native executive, and the country was governed on what is

[1] *Vide* p. 72.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

known as the Dual System. The external policy was secured by an agreement to restore Shah Alam to Delhi with a tribute from Bengal and the grant of the two Oude provinces of Kora and Allahabad; to restore Shuja-ud-Daula to Oudh, thus reduced in extent, and to support him by force of arms if necessary; and finally to maintain sufficient English forces in Bengal itself to guarantee these arrangements. The internal policy was far less clearly defined, or even envisaged, either by Clive or the Directors. They appear to have ignored the administrative responsibility involved in the Diwani, and devoted their attention solely to the reinforcement of order among their own servants. The eighteen months in which Clive retained his dictatorial powers were spent in setting the military and civil establishments to rights.

There were by this date in Bengal, in addition to the Nawab's irregular warriors, large forces under the banner of the East India Company. They comprised in 1764 eighteen battalions of Sepoys, twenty-four companies of European infantry, with four companies of artillery, one troop of Hussars, and about 1,200 irregular cavalry. These troops Clive reorganized in three brigades, each establishment consisting of the following:

1 Rossalah or troop of cavalry.
1 Company of artillery.
7 Battalions of Sepoys.
1. Regiment, i. e. 9 companies, of European infantry.[1]

These three brigades were stationed at Allahabad, Patna, and Monghyr, to be within easy reach of the exposed Province of Oudh. With the assumption of the Diwani and English responsibility for the safety of Bengal, it became necessary to settle the relations of English and native forces. Mr. Sykes proposed to the Nawab 'to dismiss the useless rabble he maintains of horse and foot, and to accept in their room of a thousand or fifteen hundred of our Sepoys; whereby a saving will arise to the Company of eighteen Lacks to be deducted from the thirty-six Lacks[2] of the Nabob's stipend that was to pass through Mohamed Reza Cawn's hands', for

[1] Williams, *Historical Account of the Bengal Native Infantry*, p. 3.
[2] This sum represents 27 lacs paid to the Nawab, and 9 lacs paid to M. R. Cawn.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

it would 'conduce to the public good to have the affair of the Nabob of Patna and the several Phouzdars, Rajas, and Zemindars over the Country established with more economy and their collections made without the charge of the military Forces, which they at present maintain'.[1] This reform appears to have occasioned the creation of a peculiar force known as the Pargana Battalions. It consisted of one battalion of each brigade 'turned over to the Revenue Department', and six new battalions which 'were solely dependent on the Revenue Board'. Two more were added shortly after.[2] This curious arrangement was made to give the collector a force with which he might compel the payment of the revenue. The effect of it was to enhance the overweening powers which shortly came into the hands of isolated Englishmen in the country districts, and to undermine the military discipline of troops employed on such ignoble service.

In both the military and civil departments of the Company's service Clive had to encounter a mutinous spirit. Since 1757 the army had received from the Nawab a payment known as the 'double batta'; on assuming control of the finances as Diwan, the Company declined to continue this species of bounty allowance. There was great indignation and the officers in a body threw up their commissions. Clive was equal to the emergency, accepted their resignations, and replaced the most truculent with officers and men from the Madras establishment. A similar outbreak occurred in the Civil Service. Many of the senior servants had fallen victims to Kasim Ali's exasperation, the juniors proved to be unfitted to replace them, and Clive called in men of experience from Madras. The juniors retorted by entering into a league to boycott the new-comers, and even the august President himself, but were forced to acquiesce in their deposition. A Committee of Inspection was then set up with a general censory power over all branches of the establishment. A further restriction was placed on the conduct of the servants by a prohibition of the practice of receiving 'nuzzerana' or presents from the native

[1] *India Office Records*, Range A. 6, September 7, 1765.
[2] Capt. Williams, *An Historical Account of the Bengal Native Infantry*, p. 7.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

princes. This exchanging of presents was an immemorial custom in the East, as the Hebrew Scriptures witness, the oil without which no part of the native Government machinery in India could be expected to work. Every official looked to the nuzzerana or 'teep'[1] as a recognized part of his income, and in accepting them from their subordinates the English had been merely adapting themselves to the ordinary custom of the country. But it was a custom arising no doubt from the rule of might rather than that of law, and approaching dangerously near to bribery, for when the English became supreme there was hardly any limit placed to the sums that many of them demanded for their good offices. Each puppet Nawab had paid heavily to the English Councillors who supported his pretensions, and the Court of Directors began to perceive with dislike that these huge sums contributed nothing to the Company's coffers, while they served to drain the country of its resources and form a serious burden on the revenue. Those who entered the Company's employ had always signed covenants or indentures defining their duties and the trading privileges accorded them, but hitherto no provision had been made to deal with a practice so foreign to English experience as the nuzzerana. On May 2, 1764, a form was drawn up to cover these omissions, and dispatched by the ship in which Clive sailed, and all servants, of whatever rank, were called upon in future to sign these 'New Covenants' in addition to the original indentures. The new undertaking pledged them to make over to the Company any acquisitions of treasure or land exceeding the value of Rs. 4,000, while the Calcutta authorities were empowered to license grants made up to Rs. 1,000. There was much delay and many evasions before these New Covenants were universally signed. Their effect was retrospective, but the attempt to recover moneys already received was long drawn out and not altogether successful. Clive's own jagir, granted in 1757, had already received the Company's sanction, but was eventually made over to it for a compensation.

With the reform of the inland trade Clive was not prepared

[1] Is this word the origin of our 'tip'?

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

to deal summarily. Kasim Ali's outbreak had awakened the Court of Directors to the enormity of the abuse, and on February 8, 1764, they had ordered the cessation of the trade until such time as new regulations for its conduct could be framed at Calcutta.[1] Those of May 1764 were meanwhile issued, but proved ineffectual,[2] and in October 1764 the Calcutta Council resolved to await Clive's arrival before discussing any fresh measure. No action was taken until the new Select Committee met on August 10, 1765. Only two members were present on this occasion, Messrs. Verelst and Sumner, but they transacted business of the very gravest moment. They resolved to create an 'Exclusive Company' for the trade in salt, betel-nut, and tobacco produced in or imported into Bengal. The Society was to consist of the Company's servants, divided into four classes according to seniority, the seniors each receiving four of the sixty shares into which the capital of thirty-two lacs was to be divided, the juniors one each.[3] The sales were to be confined to certain recognized localities, of which eight were later appointed. On August 8 the Council confirmed this scheme and appointed an exclusive committee, the two promoters and Messrs. Gray and Leycester, to deal with the business. On September 18 Clive was present at a Select Committee when the duties to be paid on the inland trade were fixed as thirty-five per cent. on salt, ten per cent. on betel, and twenty-five per cent. on tobacco. In consequence of the Diwani these duties were now payable to the Company and not to the Nawab as formerly. The agents of the Society of Trade, as it was now generally called, were chosen from among the free merchants and were the only ones allowed to live inland. They were placed under certain restrictions (November 5, 1765), forbidden to engage in trade on their own account, to lend money to officers of the native Government, to interfere with them or with the collections, or to exercise any judicial authority, but were to refer disputes to the Nizamut or to appeal to the Select Committee for

[1] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. iv, Appendix 30, p. 507.
[2] See pp. 52–3.
[3] *India Office Records*, Range A. 6, p. 504, and Range A. 7, p. 143.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

redress. The effect of the new policy was twofold. In the first place the restrictions, if scrupulously carried out, might have put an end to indiscriminate dealing in the inland trade, but on the other hand the practice of this trade by Europeans was now for the first time recognized and sanctioned, and the monopoly in fact rendered a closer one than ever, utterly excluding the native, whose proper sphere it was, and confining the whole profit to the covenanted servants. Such action was contrary, both to the spirit and the letter of the Company's orders, and on hearing of it the Directors reiterated the orders (December 24, 1765) and refused to sanction the Society, protesting 'if you pay only two and a half per cent. [as was at first proposed] and the country people twenty per cent. or perhaps forty per cent., it is as much a monopoly as ever'. Yet Clive continued the Society of Trade and defended it in his correspondence with the Directors as a proper reward for the covenanted servants; he limited its activity, however, to the salt monopoly, throwing the opium trade open on August 12, 1766, 'subject to such restrictions only as the Ministers and Officers of the Government may think proper to impose for the benefit of the Company and the Public',[1] and in August 1767 relinquishing the trade in betel-nut and tobacco.[2] It is evident that the creation of the exclusive Society had not attained its object of putting an end to general inland trade, for the Select Committee, in obedience to the Directors' orders, had, in December 1766, to restrict the use of the dustuk and to forbid all 'circular traffic from one Aurung to another'.[3]

To the end of his tenure of office, and beyond it, Clive clung to the salt monopoly. On January 16, 1767, he admitted to the Select Committee that he had received orders to abolish it, but added, 'nevertheless the Court of Directors may be induced to settle some Plan agreeable to your wishes', and he continued the defence on his return to England, writing from Bath on November 14, 1767, that salt had always been a

[1] *India Office Records*, Range A. 7, p. 61.
[2] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. iv, Appendix 59, p. 526.
[3] Ibid., p. 526.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

monopoly, that the Armenian who had farmed it in 1764 had paid the Nawab nearly £200,000 for the exclusive privilege, that it was then worth £300,000 to the Company, whereas if thrown open at a duty of ten per cent. it would only produce £31,500. The Directors determined to throw it open at a low duty, but so far admitted Clive's arguments in favour of their servants as to grant them special emoluments in lieu of the inland trade, a percentage, namely, of two and a half per cent. on the net territorial revenues accruing to the Company. The Society of Trade was consequently abolished and ceased to exist on September 1, 1768, the date on which the first percentage was payable.[1]

This sketch of Clive's second administration shows that in every department large problems remained unsolved: in the military sphere the anomalous Pargana battalions led to disputes between civil and military chiefs; in the civil service the question of covenants and presents was unsettled; in the commercial, the relations between European and Native traders; and in the sphere of government the vital question of taking over undisguised control. It had been repeatedly urged upon the Court of Directors before 1765 by Vansittart and others that radical changes were inevitable; that they must either go forward or back, assume an official right to govern, or abstain from interference with the natives. Instead of making a choice between these alternatives, the effect of the Dual System was to attempt both. On the one hand the Diwani was the assumption of an official authority, and on the other hand the Directors reiterated in every letter the strictest injunctions to their servants not to interfere directly or indirectly with the business of the Government on pain of suspension. They failed to grasp what their new position involved, and thought it possible to confine themselves to their military obligations and trade, and to receive the revenues without carrying out the administrative duties of Diwan. By

[1] The whole subject of the salt trade was reopened by W. Hastings, who in the main adopted Clive's position on this question by making the trade a privilege of the Company, though not a monopoly of the servants, whose need of it had passed. The best account of it is in the *India Office Records*, Home Miscellaneous, vol. 92, near the end of the volume.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

the treaty of Allahabad they undertook to guarantee that the Nawab should pay Shah Alam twenty-six lacs of rupees out of the revenues; retain fifty-three for himself and for the expenses of administration; and pay the remainder into the Company's coffers.[1] Under the nominal authority of the English Diwan, the Native Diwani executive, it was thought, could still act, directed by a Naib Suba for each part of the province—Mohamed Reza Khan for Bengal, Shitab Roy for Bihar, and Roy Dulub for Orissa. At the same time the Company undertook to furnish troops for the defence of Bengal from all external and internal foes. It had already been arranged with Mir Jafar that the Nawab was to maintain no more than 12,000 foot and a like number of horse,[2] and in fact the new Nawab, Mir Nujum, is said to have kept 'a great number for the Business of the Collections and the Parade of Government, but scarce any regular Military Force'. The sanction of the native executive and the authority of the Nizamut was in this way undermined, and the only real power left was that of the English troops.

That Clive fully realized the impotence of the Nizamut, to which he left the maintenance of order, is patent from his final directions to the Calcutta Board of January 16, 1767:

'The first point in Politics which I offer to your Consideration is the Form of Government. We are sensible that since the Acquisition of the Dewanni, the Power formerly belonging to the Soubah of these Provinces is Totally, in Fact, vested in the East India Company. Nothing remains to him but the Name and Shadow of Authority. This Name, however, this Shadow, it is indispensably necessary we should seem to venerate; every Mark of Distinction and Respect must be shown him, and he himself encouraged to shew his Resentment upon the least want of Respect from other Nations. Under the Sanction of a Soubah every encroachment that may be attempted by Foreign Powers can effectually be crushed without any apparent Interposition of our own Authority; and all real Grievances complained of by them, can, through the same channel, be examined into and redressed. Be it therefore always remembered that there is a Soubah, that we have

[1] Aitcheson, *Treaties, Engagements, and Sunnuds*, vol. i, pp. 60–5.
[2] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. iii, pp. 301–5.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

allotted him a Stipend, which must be regularly paid, in support of his Dignity, and that though the Revenues belong to the Company, the territorial Jurisdiction must still rest in the Chiefs of the Country acting under him and this Presidency in Conjunction. To appoint the Company's servants to the Offices of Collectors, or indeed to do any act by an exertion of the English Power, which can be equally done by the Nabob at our Instance, would be throwing off the Mask, would be declaring the Company Soubah of the Provinces. Foreign Nations would immediately take Umbrage and Complaints preferred to the British Court might have very embarrassing consequences.'[1]

To his colleagues Clive thus frankly avows the English supremacy, but cynically reminds them that 'there is a Soubah' to serve as a mask, and that while the Company enjoys the revenues his servants are to do the work. The duplicity of the Dual System resulted, not unnaturally, in the total instability of the Government of Bengal. The collections were by Clive's express orders left in the hands of the native agents. But the Nizamut, deprived of soldiery, could in no wise enforce the original system of checks upon them; nor could the English, who alone had now the forces, supply a criminal jurisdiction the very existence of which they ignored. The views of the Court of Directors expressed at about the same time—for letters took from six months to a year to reach Calcutta—show that the Diwani was for them too a strictly financial office. They wrote as follows to the Council at Calcutta on May 17, 1766:

'We conceive the Office of Dewan should be exercised only in superintending the Collection and Disposal of the Revenues; which Office, though vested in the Company, should officially be exercised by our Resident at the Durbar, under the controul of the Governor and Select Committee, the only bounds of which Controul should extend to nothing beyond the superintending the Collection of the Revenues and the receiving the Money from the Nabob's Treasury to that of the Dewannah or the Company. And this we conceive to be neither difficult nor complicate, for at the annual Poonah the Government settles with each Zemindar his monthly Payments for the ensuing year, so the monthly Payments of the Whole from the

[1] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. ii, p. 266.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Nabob's Dewan is but the total of the Monthly Payments of each Zemindar: which must be strictly kept up, and if deficient, the Company must trace what particular Province, Rajah, or Zemindar has fallen short in his Monthly Payments; or if it is necessary to extend the Power further, let the annual Poonah, by which we mean the Time when every Landholder makes his Agreement for the ensuing Year, be made with the consent of the Dewan or Company. This we conceive to be the whole Office of the Dewanny. The Administration of Justice, the Appointment to Offices or Zemindaries, in short whatever comes under the Denomination of Civil Administration we understand is to remain in the Hands of the Nabob or his Ministers.'[1]

It is perfectly clear from this dispatch that the Company ignored its responsibility; not only did the Directors fail to see that they had crippled the criminal jurisdiction of the Nizamut, they even failed to take up those tasks for which the Diwani distinguished them, the conduct of the Civil Courts and the collection of the revenues. It is misleading to say that the English in 1765 began to collect the revenues of Bengal; they began to see that they were collected and to receive the lion's share of them, but the mode of collection, with all that it involved of extortion and oppression, they left to native agents. Nor could they have acted otherwise. It required years of toilsome investigation to understand even the details, much more the main principles of the complicated systems of land-tenure and assessment on which the collections were arranged. The result was none the less disastrous; the Dual System showed immediate symptoms of failure. From 1757 to 1765 the troubles of Bengal had been due to trade abuses; from 1765 to 1772 they were due to the inherent defects in the new Government machinery. The whole horde of minor officials, Muttasaddis, Kanungoes, Amils, Zemindars, &c., were let loose to raise what they pleased from the cultivators and traders. If the victims appealed to the Naib Nazim or his Faujdars, these had not the land-servants or peons by means of whom they had formerly enforced justice, and if complaints were addressed to the only man who had

[1] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. iii, p. 399.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

them, the English Resident, he could not tell right from wrong, and was besides peremptorily forbidden to interfere. The peasants were without appeal, and many in despair deserted their holdings, becoming vagabonds or dacoits or merely starving. That something of this was foreseen by experienced members of the native and of the English governing bodies is evident from the correspondence that passed between the Calcutta Council and the influential persons at Murshidabad, while the new system was being set up (p. 75).

As a matter of fact English interference was from the first inevitable. There was, indeed, one man empowered to concern himself with the native Government. The position of Francis Sykes was unique in 1765. He was a member of the Calcutta Council; he was also Resident at Murshidabad. Mohamed Reza Khan consulted with him before taking any new measure, and submitted the accounts of the collections to him. Sykes reported all transactions to the Council, which did not scruple to criticize the accounts or forbid measures which they considered unsuitable. For instance, Sykes sends up on October 25, 1765, the 'Account particulars of Revenues collected in the province of Purnea with the different charges attending them', and they suggest reductions in these latter; he consults with Mohamed Reza Khan how the number of toll stations may be lessened and fixes them at twenty-four, and, most important of all, he creates the first courts of justice to be held on English lines outside Calcutta, and having jurisdiction over natives.

But while Sykes was the only servant allowed to exercise influence with the Nizamut, some others had been gaining administrative experience in another sphere. In 1757 Mir Jafar had assigned the revenues of Burdwan, Midnapore, and Chittagong to the Company in payment of all outstanding and current debts, and in 1760 the districts were actually ceded to the Company. From 1758 they had taken over the management themselves, and by 1765 had begun to appreciate some of the difficulties involved. These three districts, in fact, proved the first nursery of English administrators for Bengal, as that province in turn was to be the school for our Imperial

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

administrators. The contrast between the good conditions obtaining in Burdwan under English conduct and those in the rest of Bengal first made clear to the Calcutta Council, and through them to the Court of Directors, that their Dual System needed amendment. The advice was taken of Sykes's successor, Becher, and of the President, Verelst, who had been previously for three years in charge of the ceded lands, Burdwan, &c. The satisfactory result of the English management there led them to think that the like effect might be produced in the Nawab's lands by an English executive. They decided to intervene generally in the collections by means of 'supervisors', i. e. 'the appointment of European gentlemen to supervise the different provinces, and to control the conduct of the agents of the Country Government'[1] (*vide* p. 85). In theory the plan was a good one, but it did not take into practical account the enormity of the evils against which each young servant appointed to the new posts was expected to contend. None of them could have had more than three or four years' administrative experience, and that experimental, in a medium entirely new to them. They must of necessity be dependent for information and the execution of their orders on natives with whom venality was no crime: each in his district was absolute, with none to check him except on the evidence of his own reports. Five years were enough to prove the experiment of supervisorships a mistake. Young servants with little or no experience of the revenue system were hurriedly appointed in the middle of the financial year 1769, despite the protests of the very man who had proposed the plan, and saw that such haste would discredit it. They were empowered to suspend the native collector's proceedings and to examine his officers on any complaint brought before them. These native agents, who had been entirely uncontrolled since the crippling of the Nizamut in the year 1765, protested the impossibility of collecting the revenues unless they were given a free hand. Neither the authorities at Calcutta, the Resident at Murshid-

[1] Select Committee's Proceedings: Wheeler, *Early Records of British India*, p. 366.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

abad, nor even Mohamed Reza Khan himself, the representative of the Nizamut, could tell how far their protests were genuine, but since they produced a deadlock in the financial business, the Council was forced to yield to them and the obstructive powers of the supervisors were withdrawn for a time. Exceptions were made in the case of four experienced men, who retained office and were even empowered themselves to draw up the assessment for their districts and to preside over the collections, and by degrees this system became general. Its effects were twofold. In the first place, it made these Englishmen the supreme lords each in his own district, for their complete control of trade was now reinforced by the powers of a judge and those of a tax-collector. Armed in this triple brass they could exploit the country unhindered, and their posts became the most coveted in the service. The senior merchants and members of the Council were soon dispersed all over the country districts as supervisors or Residents, and the tedious work of the Calcutta Board was left to the President and any juniors he could prevail upon to form a quorum. The supreme body lost its weight, and its decrees were ignored; nothing, it would seem, could be worse, and yet in this very system of supervisorships the seeds of a new order of things germinated. In the intervals of making their fortunes some of these men acquired experience and a real interest in the condition of their subjects, and so the way was paved for an active assumption of responsibility and that 'starting forth as Dewan' in fact as well as in name, which was to be publicly avowed in 1772, and to make the British 'Raj' once for all supreme in India.

But for the time being only the ill effects were apparent in the supervisors' rule; it merely created a fresh anomaly, and little more was needed to render the whole scene chaotic. This was contributed by fresh dispatches from England.

The inquiries of 1766 to 1769 had led to the appointment of three Commissioners, Messrs. Vansittart, Scrafton, and Forde, with supreme powers to reform the administration. The directions for their reception involved changes in the Government, and these instructions reached India though the Com-

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

missioners themselves were lost at sea. The Calcutta Council and the Select Committee, while waiting vainly for their appearance, disputed as to the intention of the instructions, and issued contradictory orders in consequence. The Council created a Board of Revenue at Murshidabad and Patna in 1770, July 6,[1] to take control of the collections, thereby superseding the supervisors; the Select Committee reiterated their orders to them to act independently. As if the negation of government thus produced were not enough to ruin the unhappy country, there befell at this very time the most grievous drought and famine known in the history of India. It soon became a question, not how to tax the ryots but how to keep them alive; the mortality was computed to amount to one-half, and whole tracts of Purnea and Bahar returned to jungle for lack of inhabitants.

If 1756, the year of the 'Black Hole' disaster, looms dark in the history of Bengal, the period that follows serves only to deepen that gloom. Clive in his Dual System attempted to throw a light, but it proved to be the veriest will-o'-the-wisp, and the English Company wandered deeper and deeper into the night of disorder that seemed to many in 1770 without hope of dawn. Yet there were men who had learned from these grievous experiences, and among them the most expert and not the least devoted was Warren Hastings.

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER III

### No. 1. First Offer of Diwani to Clive.

*I. O. Records*, Abstract Coast and Bay, i. 237.

*Dispatch from Calcutta Board to the Court of Directors.*

October 9, 1759.

Para. 9. Revenues of the Province amounting to 50 lacks p.a. the President has been applied to from the Vizier to become Collector thereof, that Officer is stiled the King's Duan and the second in rank in the Kingdom, nothing would be able to remove the weight it would give the Company. He has temporized for the present from the absence of their small

[1] *India Office Records*, Range A. 17.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

force and the small hopes of more, if more vigorous measures are not pursued a fair opportunity of making the Company all in all here will be lost.

Para. 11. . . . the Forces requisite will be 2,000 Europeans. . . .

## No. 2

### Accounts of Kasim Ali and his Government.

British Museum Add. MS. 29206.

*Memorial written by W. Hastings, undated.*

The necessity of the measures which occasioned the removal of Jaffier Ali Cawn from the Subahship has been very fully set forth in the first part of the Memorial.[1] The choice of a successor to so weighty a charge could not possibly have fallen upon a better man for it than Mir Cossim, who was known to be possessed in a very high degree of those qualities, the want of which had ruined his predecessor and whose very faults (I mean such as were at that time known) were of that stamp which with respect to our Government gave them the merit of equal virtues.

He was esteemed a man of understanding, of an uncommon talent for business, and great application and perseverance, joined to a thriftiness, which how little soever it might ennoble his own character was a quality most essentially necessary in a man who had to restore an impoverished state, and clear off debts which had been accumulating for three years before. His timidity, the little inclination he had ever shown for war, with which he has been often reproached, would hardly have disqualified him for the Subahship, since it effectually secured us from any designs that he might form against our Government and disposed him the easier to bear the effects of that superiority which we possessed over him: a consequence which we soon had occasion to experience, since a spirit superior to that of a worm when trodden upon could not have brooked the many daily affronts and injuries which he was exposed to from the instant of his advancement to the Subahship. He began his government with retrenching the extravagant expenses of his predecessor and had made a considerable progress in discharging the vast debts with which he was encumbered, with the revenues of Bengal then in a state of distraction, before he possessed a foot of ground in the Province of Bahar. Here he was excluded from any authority or share in the revenue, and Ramnarain, the Naib of the Pro-

[1] It has not been possible to trace the first part of this Memorial.

vince and an acknowledged servant of the Nabob, supported in an assumed independency in direct violation of the treaty which we had but just ratified with him; from a pretended delicacy with respect to some prior engagement [which if it ever existed] never yet appeared upon record, nor could any one of those who were the frequent advocates for Ramnarain [i. e. Ellis, &c.] ever show of what nature those engagements were. The war with the Shahzada was no sooner at an end, and that Prince in our power, than a blind and mad zeal for his interests instantly superseded all our fidelity to the power in alliance with us, and instead of banishing him from the Province, (which had been the most prudent step) or making use of the advantages which we had acquired by his defeat, while he remained in it, he became the lord of the province, the disposal of our rights was submitted to his will, denied us unless purchased at a large expense, the confirmation of the Nabob's title to the Subahdaree after we had thus rendered it necessary to his holding it, obstinately opposed till the Nabob found himself compelled to buy his vassalage at the rate of lacks[1] of rupees to the distress of his revenues and the great diminution of the English power to which he owed and by which alone he still held his government. The abetted insolence and forged plots of Ramnarain, the insulting arrogance of one commander, the caprice and credulity of the other formed the basis of all our transactions with the Nabob during the first period of his government which was concluded with that extraordinary memorable parade of Col. Coote's through the Nabob's camps, an event [a break occurs at this point in the manuscript].

It is not to be doubted that Meer Cossim had in his constitution the seeds of that cruelty and revenge which burst out with such fury when his moderation and forbearance could no longer serve him in any stead. To his own subjects he had behaved with great lenity, of which some instances have been given in the course of this memorial. He had sense enough to know that the English friendship would be his greatest security and to dread their power if ever they should become his enemies. This made him put on the greatest caution to avoid giving any occasion for a dispute with them which might weaken his connections with the English in general, as it will be seen that on every occasion where he expressed his resentment of injuries done him, his oppressors never failed to produce it as an instance of his disaffection to the English and mistrust of their faith. In the first period of his government, while he saw himself in no great danger of coming to a rupture

[1] Blank in the manuscript.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

with us, he steadily adhered to this principle; but when disputes became more serious and seemed to portend a breach between us, sensible of the encreased power of his enemies, and disappointed of the support which he had been made to expect from the Company, he found himself necessitated to act a different part and at the same time that he strove to evade the impending storm, to provide against the effects of it. This will be easily seen in the change of his behaviour after the summoning of the General Council, and to this cause may be ascribed the too great attentions which he paid to the complaints of his officers and his connivance at their oppressions, which whilst his complaints against our own agents remained still unredeemed, he could not punish without perhaps exposing his own weakness and forfeiting the attachment of the most useful of his subjects. Thus far his conduct will bear the severest examination. But how dreadful the reverse of his character when the war broke out and his temper, no longer under restraint, gave a loose to all his passions. The hoarded resentment of all the injuries which he had sustained in a continual exertion of patience during three years of his government, now aggravated by his natural timidity, and the prospect of an almost inevitable ruin before him, from this time took entire possession of his mind and drove from thence every principle, till it had satiated itself with the blood of every person within his reach, who had either contributed to his misfortunes or even by real or fancied connection with his enemies became the objects of his revenge. Such was the dreadful end of the measures which a violent party formed with immoveable perseverance from the beginning of Meer Cossim's Government, although I had spared no pains to persuade them and all the world of the necessity of the measures which I had taken, to induce them to a temper less liable to produce those effects which have fallen with equal severity upon us all.

*I. O. Records*, Range A. 6, p. 335.

*Extract from the letter of a Servant at Murshidabad to the Calcutta Board.*[1]

March 25, 1765.

In the opinion of most people the collections were never so well attended to and known as under Cossim Ali Cawn, who

[1] The four servants sent as deputies to arrange Nujum's relations with the Company were Messrs. Johnstone, Senior, Middleton, and Gray, who had now returned to Calcutta.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

abolished the exorbitant power of the Royroyan and placed the lands in the hands of different collectors who had under them from five to fifty lacks p. a. and were accountable only to the Nabob himself. Since his time the post of Royroyan has been re-established and the collections thrown into the old channel, the accounts of the Khalsa Jagheer etc. kept separate and Amils and Phouzdars appointed to the several districts which have been smaller and of course the number of Amils and expence of collections much increased. . . .

Though we have not made it our business to interfere in what concerns the Collections, and to avoid giving any suspicions to the Nabob have been as tender as possible on this point, yet in the course of our inquiries We cant but observe they appear to have been managed both last year and this with most scandalous neglect and connivance. In every quarter tho' the country has been in tranquillity and the demands of the revenue everywhere greatly short of what they were fixed at in the Jummabundy settled by Mir Cossim, and none of the ballances due from the Zemindars in his time has been since demanded. Yet notwithstanding the Revenues have been everywhere suffered to fall behindhand and a very great proportion is still outstanding even of this year's rent, besides all the ballances of last year and not a month remaining of this year to recover it in.

*I. O. Records*, Range A. 6, p. 772.

*Minute of Mr. Sumner on the Method of Revenue Collections.*

December 20, 1765.

The Elmaunders (stewards) and Carmatcherries (clerks) collect the revenues from the tenants. They deduct their own wages, charges for paper, Ink, Oyl, Cutcherry repairs, and Peons wages from the rents, the Ballance is then remitted to the Izerdars (farmers). The Izerdars receive the Rents from the different Carmatcherries, they keep a Naib (deputy), Writers, Vackeels, and Peons, they defray sundry expences of the Cutcherries, and must (say they get no profit) at least maintain their own families as well as these Servants. The amount of their agreement they pay to the Zemindars. The Zemindars receive the Rents from the Izerdars, they keep a Duan, Carkoons, Writers, Vakeels, Jemmautdars, Peons, Pykes and all Guards. They further defray the charges of Poolbundy (repairs of dams), Kaulbundy (stopping overflowing of creeks), repairs of Cutcherries, expenses of Paper, Ink, Oyl,

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

etc. at the place of the general collection; the Zemindar himself and family and Dependents must be maintained, and a share of profit reserved for himself, their rents are then sent to the Oududar or Phouzdar. The Oududar or Phouzdar again defrays the charges of his Cutcherries and Servants and must himself be maintained with all his train. The charge of Servants stated in the Burdwan accounts under the head of Land-servants, is the same through the whole country; a certain proportion of land is allotted for them in lieu of wages in every Zemindari more or less; and upon the whole is computed to be equal if not more than what is allowed in the Burdwan province. . . . Thus it appears evident that the charges on the Collections of the Revenues of Bengal are first deducted from the product of the lands and the ballance only which is paid into the Muxadavad Treasury esteemed their real value.

## No. 3. Arrangements made on the Accession of Nujum-ud-Daula.

*I. O. Records*, Range A. 6, p. 195.

*Minute by Mr. Gray protesting against the Treaty concluded by President Spencer and the Council.*

February 19, 1765.

However altho' it is agreed that Nujim-o-Dowla should be Nabob, yet this Mark of Friendship to his Family is clogged with Articles which leave him only the Name without any part of the Power. For without having consulted his opinion or his inclination it is dictated to him that Mohamed Reza Cawn, a servant of his father, at present Naib of Dacca, must be Naib Subah, and that in a manner which will throw the entire administration into his hands. It has been also proposed that the Collection of the Revenues should be equally divided between Maharange Nundcomar and Roydulub. And further it is resolved to reserve to the Board a negative Voice in the Appointment of all the other Mutseddies and Officers of the Government. From those articles of the Treaty proposed to be made with the new Nabob I from my heart dissent, considering them as the greatest mortification we can offer to a Prince our Ally and not our Slave; to one connected with us by the ties of Friendship and not subjected to us by conquest. As to Mohamed Reza Cawn the late Nabob had a very

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

great dislike to him because he was deficient in his Revenues, and for other reasons, and the present Nabob not only hates him, but is jealous and afraid of his aspiring temper. To impose therefore such a person upon him is treating him with cruelty as well as indignity, and would rather serve to drive him to despair than to assist him in the Government. For Mohamed Reza Cawn will have too great an opportunity of retaliating upon the Nabob for the injuries he will suppose he has sustained from his father. Besides Mohamed Reza Cawn is by no means of a sufficient Rank to hold a Post which commands such distinguished Mutseddies as the Royroyan and the Nizamut Dewan, two officers holding precedence of every man in the Country excepting the Nabob and his own Family.

There appears to me a great impropriety in dividing the Revenues equally between Maharange Nundcomar and Roydulub, nor can it be done without altering the form of Government of the Country. Nundcomar is the proper Royroyan by the King's appointment and it is his business alone to collect the general Revenues of the country from the different Naibs, Fouzdars, etc. Roydulub is Nizamut Dewan and his business is to collect the rents of the Nazim's Jaghire and to have charge of the Disbursements of the Subahdarry. These two departments of the Government have their distinct Offices and Registers; and are independent of one another; they cannot be changed or blended without changing the Regulations by which the Country hath been heretofore governed, and if once we begin to make alterations in the Form of Government We may as well new model it entirely. . . .

[*Conclusion of above Minute.*]

. . . Had it been the Company's intention to interfere in the Government of the Nabob's country, they would not have failed to send instructions and Orders to that purpose, hitherto I have seen none and until such Orders arrive I shall look upon all Encroachments on the Nabob's Authority as Usurpations on our part, and protest against them. Was the Nabob himself to offer them I should not agree, much less can I approve of their being forced upon him.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

## No. 4. COVENANTS MADE BY EAST INDIA COMPANY WITH THEIR SERVANTS.

*House of Commons Reports*, vol. i, Appendix 1, p. 181.

The following series of covenants was issued by the East India Company to its servants for signature, between 1756 and 1772:

To Writers:—

1st Covenants issued in 1756, in use till July 1770.
2nd Covenants issued May 1764, in use till July 1772.
3rd Covenants issued July 1770, in use till July 1772.

Military Officers' Covenants issued May 1764 to July 1770.

The following extract is from the first Writers' Covenants of 1756, commonly called 'the New Covenants':

'A. B. . . . will not directly or indirectly take, accept or receive or agree to take, accept or receive any Gift, Reward, Gratuity, Allowance, Compensation, Sum or Sums of Money whatsoever from any Persons or Person, of whom he, the said A. B. shall by himself or any agent for him, buy or barter any Goods, Merchandize, Treasure or Effects for or upon account of the said Company [or from those to whom he sells]. . . . And upon condition that the said A. B. shall in all things perform his Covenants and Agreements with the said Company and to encourage him so to do, It is further covenanted and agreed by and between the said Parties to these Presents, that it shall and may be lawful to and for the said A. B. and the Company doth accordingly license the said A. B. during the said 5 years, commencing as aforesaid, freely to trade and traffick for his own account only, from Port to Port in India, or elsewhere, within the Limits aforesaid, [i. e. between the Cape of Good Hope and the Straits of Magellan] but not to or from any Place without the same, [further that servants having injured Natives may be judged and punished by the Company].

And the said A. B. doth . . . agree that he . . . will not carry on . . . Trade either from Europe to the East Indies or to any Place within the said Company's limits . . . or from the East Indies etc. to Europe . . . nor shall carry on, use or be concerned in any Trade or Traffick whatsoever but such as is expressly allowed . . . by the true Intent and Meaning of these Presents.'

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

The second Writers' Covenant was shorter and complementary to the above, and provided against the acceptance of nuzzerana by the following clauses:

'. . . [that he will not] take . . . any Gift or Grant of Lands, or Rents or Revenues issuing out of Lands, or any Territorial Possession, Jurisdiction, Dominion, Power or Authority whatsoever from any of the Indian Princes, Sovereigns, Soubahs or Nabobs or any of their Ministers, Servants or Agents . . . without the License and Consent of the Court of Directors . . . nor shall accept, take or receive any Gift etc. . . . in Money, Effects, Jewels or otherwise howsoever . . . exceeding the value of 4000 Rupees without the License of the Court of Directors . . . nor any such Reward etc. exceeding the value of 1000 Rupees without the License of the President and Council and that he shall and will convey, assign and make over to the said United Company . . . every such Gifts or Grants of Lands etc.; and also account for and pay to the said United Company . . . all and every such Gifts or Grants of Lands etc.'

The third Writers' Covenant was similar to the first, but with this important addition:

'[A. B.] in case of default in any of the Covenants or being concerned in buying war material etc. for Country Powers, or corresponding with them or arranging loans for them may be dismissed and punished and must return to Europe.'

[There is in this Covenant no allusion to the nuzzerana, so that the second Covenant would appear to have been used supplementarily and as a complement to the first and third. Thus from 1756 to 1764 only the first would be in use; from 1764 to 1770 the first and second; and from 1770 to 1772 the second and third only, the third superseding the first. Beyond that date the evidence does not go, as the House of Commons inquiry was held in that year.]

## No. 5. Trade Abuses in 1765.

*I. O. Records*, Range A. 7, p. 10.

*Letter from Mohamed Reza Khan sent to the Secret Committee at Calcutta.*

February 19, 1765.

The Zemindars of the Pergunnah Radshay Recoumpoor and other Districts in the Soubah of Bengal complain that the Factories of English Gentlemen in the Pergunnahs are many

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

and their Gomastahs are in all places and in every Village almost throughout the Province of Bengal; That they trade in Linnen, Chunam, Mustardseed, Tobacco, Turmerick, Oil, Rice, Hemp, Gunnies, Wheat, in short in all Kinds of Grain, Linnen and whatever other Commodities are produced in the Country; That in order to purchase these Articles, they force their Money on the ryots, and having by these oppressive means bought their goods at a low Rate, they oblige the Inhabitants and Shopkeepers to take them at an high price, exceeding what is paid in the Markets; That they do not pay the Customs due to the Sircar, but are guilty of all manner of seditious and injurious acts, for Instance when at any time the Malguzarree is demanded of the Taalucdars, Roys etc. subjects of the Sircar, the aforesaid Gomastahs under pretence of debts due, or accounts to be settled do not let them go, or suffer the Revenues to be taken from them, and upon complaints and at the Instance of lying informers and base men, they place their Peons over the Ryotts and involve them in a variety of troubles, that by pressing people violently into their service and imposing many and divers commands on the Officers of the Government, the Inhabitants, the Tradesmen and others they ruin everybody and reduce the villages and Gunges to a state of desolation. It is by these iniquitous Practices that the people of the Country have been ruined and driven to flight and that the Revenues of the Sircar have been injured; there is now scarce anything of worth left in the country.

*Resolution of the Secret Committee taken in consequence, on the same date.*

Agreed: that we recommend to the Board to prohibit under the severest penalties all the Company's servants, whether residing at the Presidency, the Subordinates or the Aurungs from yielding countenance shelter or protection to any of their Gomastahs, who shall presume to interfere directly or indirectly with the affairs of Government or upon any pretence whatever, give impediment or Obstruction to the Officers of the Revenue in levying the Collections of the several Districts committed to their Charge. And that in all matters of Dispute or difference, whereby the Revenue can possibly be affected, these Gomastahs or their constituents shall apply to the Government for redress or in case of refusal to the Resident at the Durbar, the Chiefs of Subordinates, who shall make application through the regular channel, the Governor and Council or the Select Committee.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

*Letter from Mohamed Reza Khan, received October 4, 1765.*

*I. O. Records*, Range A. 6, p. 657.

There are many persons who with pretence of debts being due to them, making use of the name of the Factory disturb the Zemindaries and Districts of the Chuckla of Jehangheer-nuggur and sending Peons to seize People obstruct the Revenues of the Sircar. The particulars are very long, but I briefly mentioned the matter to you [1] at Mootagyl.[2] Moreover several evasive Zemindars and Taaluckdars borrow more or less from the Dependents of the Factory and when their Rents are demanded from them go and shelter themselves under their protection, so as to be out of the power of the Aumils—With the pretence of debts being due to them they carry their creditors into their districts and embezzle the revenues so that the money of the Sircar remains unpaid and spreading about reports that numbers of the Villages are rented to Dependents of the Factory, they practise villanous tricks. I accordingly receive from the Aumils frequent complaints of these proceedings. As I do not conceive that the interruptions of the revenue of the Sircar can be put a stop to without removing these pretences, I hope you will be kind enough to write to the Gentlemen of the Factories of Jehangheer-nuggur and Luckypore etc. that none of the dependents of the factory must lend money to the Zemindars etc. without the knowledge of the Aumil, nor hold any farm nor interfere in the affairs of the country nor send any people into the districts and make a disturbance, and that whatsoever demands they have upon the Zemindars etc. they must lay the amount thereof before Jessarut Cawn, the Naib at Jehangheer-nuggur, that he may oblige the people to pay whatsoever is just.

*I. O. Records*, Range A. 6, p. 652, &c.

[The Select Committee at once took action and issued the following orders :]

October 5, 1765.

. . . servants, civil and military, not to interfere directly or indirectly with the business of the Government on pain of suspension.

[1] These letters were addressed in the first instance to F. Sykes, the Resident at the Durbar, and by him forwarded to the Secret Committee.

[2] A garden-palace at Murshidabad.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Observing that our orders to the Chiefs of the Subordinates to send lists to the Committee of all Europeans residing within their several districts who are not in the Company's service, have been neglected,

Resolved that we repeat the above Orders, requiring them positively not only to send the most accurate lists in their power, but the persons themselves to Calcutta by the 21st inst. at which time the Company's protection will absolutely cease and they must stand to all the consequences of being left entirely in the power of the Country Government.

*I. O. Records*, Range A. 6, p. 706.

[The next letter of importance is from Francis Sykes on the subject of the custom-houses. It presents a similar picture of the confusion caused by English excesses.]

November 5, 1765.

The duties arising from the Pachautrah Office at Muxadavad only a few years ago, amounted to R. 3,84,000; I find there is now existing scarcely anything more than the name, I have accordingly got Mohamed Reza Cawn to appoint a person of integrity and assiduity to inspect into the Drogahs' proceedings and keep an exact account of the Duties arising to the Government as it has been for many years established; the like regulations I have desired might take place in the Tanksall [mint] where abuses appear equally as great. I find it will be absolutely necessary some regulations should be fixed on for the government of the Chokeys, all over the country, for which purpose I have got Mohamed Reza Cawn to write to the Phousdars and Zemindars of the different Provinces for an exact account of all the Chokeys now kept up, that proper arrangements may be made and a few considerable ones established in the most convenient parts of the country which will answer the purpose much more effectually than the superfluous number that do now exist, which have in some degree only served to subvert the true intent for which they were ordered, and throwing a number of difficulties in the way of trade in general.

Fraud and villany appears to have been carried to so great a height in every Department that I am no longer surprised that the Nabobs of late have been so much distressed in their Government, a total change by degrees must be made, and it can only be by degrees brought about, without great disturbance and murmuring all over the Country. I am exerting

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

my utmost endeavour for that purpose but have to struggle with every difficulty that can be thrown in my way by Ministers, Mutseddies, Congoes [i. e. Kanongoes] etc. and their dependents, yet with a proper support from you, I make not the least doubt in time but I shall accomplish your most sanguine expectations.

*Second letter from F. Sykes.*

*I. O. Records*, Range A. 6, p. 723.

November 22, 1765.

I most heartily wish some method could be taken to prevent the gentlemen, civil as well as military, from sending for the different officers of the Government on every frivolous pretence by which the Collections are greatly impeded, and owing to the distance such circumstances happen from me I find it a most difficult matter to be a proper judge whether they are acting in virtue of their station or in open violence to your orders.

The expences of Moreas, Pikes, Servants, Burgundasses, Roads, Charity with other contingent articles attending the Collections amounting to R. 10,24,129: 7: 17 are large and enormous, notwithstanding I have retrenched them above one half, yet I cannot with any propriety attempt to reduce them lower this year, particularly as the Ministers declare they are not only reasonable but indispensably necessary, however as I get a greater insight into the nature of these charges, and the Collections in general I shall be better able to judge what are superfluous and what are not so.

*Third letter from F. Sykes.*

*I. O. Records*, Range A. 6, p. 747.

November 29, 1765.

I have with the assistance of the Ministers made an arrangement of the Chokeys necessary to be kept up and supported for the collecting of the proper Duties and Customs arising from the Trade and Merchandize of the Country. We have fixed upon 24. . . . Omsid Ally Cawn is appointed Pachowtrah Drogah and the head of this office, he as well as the Ministers demand 8 to 10 Seapoys at every principal Chokey . . . (I think it absolutely necessary). . . . The Chokeys belonging to the Phousdars which have so long been a disgrace to the Govern-

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

ment are entirely abolished and only some of the most necessary ones belonging to the Zemindars will for the future be kept up for the Land Collections.

## TRADE REGULATIONS.

*I. O. Records*, Range A. 7 (pages not numbered).

[In response to F. Sykes's appeal of November 22, Regulations were issued by the Secret Committee in the following form. The passages bracketed are taken from Sykes's draft and have been omitted or modified in the Secret Committee's official version.]

November 29, 1767.

Regulations circulated by the Ministers to the Zemindars and Officers of Government.

1st. That they are to suffer no Gomastahs whatever to reside in the Districts within their Jurisdiction but such as are empowered by having Perwannahs under the Seal of the Nizam, the Company or the Governor.

2nd. That no Gomastahs are to buy or sell but such Articles as are specified in their Perwannahs, and these with the Consent and Freewill of the Ryotts, and by no means to use Force or Compulsion in the Prosecution of their Business, that in case any Gomastah do buy or sell of such Articles as are not specified in their Perwannahs, or do collect Grain or other Necessaries of Life to sell again on the Spot or anyways oppress or illuse the Ryotts, the Officers of the Government are required to exert their Authority to suppress such Abuses, and in case of any Disobedience or Non-compliance on the Part of the Gomastahs, they are to represent the same to the Ministers, who will cause exemplary Punishment to be inflicted.

3rd. That the Trade in Salt, Betelnut and Tobacco is in future to be carried on by such Merchants only as are Natives of the Country, and as a stated Duty will be collected on those Articles before a Rowana is given for their Proceeding from the Place of Purchase, no farther Collections, whether of Mongen, or other Customs, are to be made thereon in order that from the Sale of the Merchants goods to the Consumption of the Poor there may be no Cause of Enhancement in the Price. Also that several Merchants have bought large Quantities of Salt from the Committee of Trade, it is proper that none do impede them in the Disposal thereof or make any Demands for Duties either from Buyer or Seller.

4th. That the (English) French, Dutch and other Foreigners

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

are by the Nizam forbidden to traffic (in Salt, Betelnut or Tobacco, Grain or other Articles which are the Consumption of this Country, that the licensed Trade of the French and Dutch Companies is in Cloths of Cotton or Silk and such other Goods as are carried in Ships for Europe) in Salt, Betelnut and Tobacco. They are also forbidden to trade in Grain and other Articles essential for the immediate Necessaries of Life, except for the Consumption of the Inhabitants residing in their Settlements under their Protection. The Intentions of the Nizamut respecting the licensed Trade of the English, French and Dutch Companies are relative only to Cotton, Silk and such other Goods as are exported from this Country to Foreign Parts. That whenever any Gomastah, taking the Name of the (English) French, Dutch etc. do carry on Trade in unlicensed Articles it is the Duty of the Officers of the Government to seize and send them to the City, but that whilst their People carry on such Business only as is allowed of, and has of old been customary, behaving themselves peaceably and quietly and without Oppression towards the Ryotts their Commerce is to be supported and no impediment thrown in their way.

5th. That as the Freedom and Circulation of Trade is the means of giving Bread to the industrious Inhabitants, Manufactories of Cloth and Silk the Employment of the Poor, and the Sale of their Grain and the Product of their Lands enables the Ryotts to pay their Rents and support their Families—it is proper that the Officers of the Government do afford every necessary Encouragement and Protection as well to the Merchants and Traders of the Country as to such Gomastahs who are furnished with Perwannahs (under the above Restrictions) to carry on their Trade with the Consent and Freewill of the Ryotts, and that whosoever of the Aumils and Zemindars is found deficient herein they will be made answer themselves for it in the severest Manner.

(6th. That no European Nations shall be permitted to establish New Factories or any European to go into the Country and carry on a Traffic without the express permission of the Government under Pain of Confiscation of all such Goods as he may be then trafficking.)

7th. That it being the Desire of the Nazim and the English Company to prefer before all things the Good Order and well-governing of these Provinces, these Regulations are established in order that the Poor may be relieved from Oppression and Vexation and the Merchants enabled to carry on their Trade with Freedom which are the means of Wealth to this Country and Benefit to its Inhabitants—. It is therefore



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

required that the strictest Obedience be paid to this Perwannah, and that it be registered in the Public Cutcherry and Circulated to all the lesser (Zemindars and) Aumils, that whenever any Disputes or Disturbances shall happen with Gomastahs or others Recourse may be had hereto and Decision given accordingly.

### *F. Sykes's conception of the office of Diwan.*

*I. O. Records*, Range A. 8.

January 12, 1768.

I have on every Occasion been as attentive as possible to the Point you recommend of acknowledging the Nabob as principal in the Government and have always avoided interfering in any public Act except where the Revenues were concerned, in which, I conceive, that the Company as Dewan to the King have a Right to interpose, as also that it is extremely necessary they should for the proper Application thereof and to prevent the Dissipation of the public Wealth and an entire Misapplication from its proposed Channels.

### Trade Abuses, 1765 to 1769.

### *Letter from Becher, Resident at Murshidabad in succession to F. Sykes.*

*I. O. Records*, Range A. 9. Select Committee's Proceedings of July 8, 1769.

May 7, 1769.

Since . . . the Hon. Company have been in possession of the Dewannee the Influence that has been used in providing their Investment and under their Name, Goods, on private Account, has proved such a Monopoly, that the Chassars, Manufacturers etc. have been obliged to sell their Commodities at any price, Those employed to purchase for the English, thought proper to give them. They had no Choice, if any Country Merchant, Armenian or other attempted to purchase; there was an immediate Cry that it interfered with the Company's Investment. This plea has been made use [of] in all Quarters for private Emolument to the Stagnation of Trade, and the Oppression of the Chassars, Manufacturers etc. These latter finding no free vent for their Commodities, are discouraged from producing them and it is certain that the Quantity of Putney produced in the Districts hereabout decreases annually; and it is certain that if the present Monopolizing System con-

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

tinues even the Company's Investment will be reduced very low although all other Considerations should continue to give way to it: so that even in that Respect it becomes good policy to adopt a better System: and when it is further considered that the Company are now the Lords of this Country and the Revenues flow into their Treasury, with me there does not remain a doubt, that it is for their true Interest that a Plan should be adopted which will leave Trade free and open, by which means only proper Encouragement can be given to the Ryotts, and Manufacturers to raise and make the Assortments required for the Company.

I well remember this Country when Trade was free, and the flourishing State it was then in; with Concern I now see its present ruinous Condition which I am convinced is greatly owing to the Monopoly that has been made of late years in the Company's Name of almost all the Manufactures in the Country. Let the Trade be made free, and this fine Country will soon recover itself, the Revenues increase, and the Company procure as large an Investment as they can spare Money to purchase, and these Purchases will prove a Benefit to the Country instead of tending to its Ruin as they do now to Demonstration.

. . . The Revenues must encrease as well by the additional Cultivation that will ensue, as by the Duties paid to the Government by the Natives, Armenians, etc. who will then be able to purchase Goods at the first Hand, which Liberty they have been deprived of for some years, which has occasioned a Decrease in the Collection of Duties on Goods under the pocholtra[1] of Muxadavad only, of three Lacks of Rupees at least p. a. In former Times they collected between 4 and 5*l.* a year: the poor man who rented that Office last year at 2*l.* has been obliged to sell his house and goods to make payment of 1,70,000; the other 30,000 is a Loss on the estimated Revenue of the Year.

### *Minute by Verelst on Trade Abuses.*

*I. O. Records*, Range A. 9 [unpaged], third page of Minute.

August 11, 1769.

Another object . . . should be to trace the Articles of Merchandize upwards from the Hands of the Cultivator or Manufacturer through the several Classes of Purchasers.

The Price charged to the Merchants by their Agents is easily

[1] Pachautrah Drogah = Customs official.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

known, but it is a much harder Task to fix what the Manufacturer receives for the Labour of his Hands; for upon him the Oppression seems to fall the heaviest, and in his condition it is that the Evil exists in its full force and violence.

When we consider that the prices of all sorts of Merchandize have been considerably advanced within these 20 years and that the Quality of the Manufactures is worse and the Quantity diminished; that public duties are decreased, and that the necessaries of life are as cheap to the Cultivator and Manufacturer now as they were formerly—from what causes are we to derive the great Discouragement to which the Trade of these Provinces is subject . . . ? The pernicious Cause . . . will I believe be found in the undue Influence, which has been in general exerted by the Agents of Europeans, who joining the power which they borrowed from their Masters' Names and Ascendency to their native proneness to oppress, became Tyrants instead of Merchants; imposing Goods upon the Ryotts at an arbitrary Rate, compelling them to part with their Labour at an under Price and spreading the baneful Effects of Monopoly and Extortion on every Side of them. . . .

. . . Evils unknown to us before. These will be found under the Heads of Nuzzerannees, Brokerage, Discount on Rupees, Interest on Advances for Cultivation and Manufactures, and Fines for Non-Compliance with Terms of Contract, all of which are deducted after an apparent and nominal Rate of Market Price has been previously affixed to the Goods. These could not well take place without engaging a Multitude of Accomplices; as the Agent lays Taxes on the Broker, the Broker levies them from the Cultivator, or Manufacturer: and their respective Dependents never fail partaking in the Spoil. Even here the Oppression does not cease, since by artfully engaging them in Advance, they are made a prey to their greedy Creditors, encreasing Poverty weighs them down, Debts and corporal punishments silence their Murmurs. . . .

. . . The Improvements which have been effected in Burdwan. . . . When I first entered on the Charge, the Farmer had no expectation of retaining his Lands beyond the short space of 3 years, and of course ransacked the Country to avail himself of so transient a possession. The Result of this Insecurity and temporary Interest was that I found the greatest part of the Country racked, and considerable Tracts wholly depopulated. I laid a Foundation for destroying so prejudicial a Spirit by proposing instead of short Leases for three Years only Grants for longer Terms or rather for Perpetuities.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Greater Prospects still were opened to the Ryotts by my letting the Lands at a low, gradually encreasing Rent, for 4 or 5 Years and promising a Preference and Extension of Leases at the Time of Renewal. By the Attention of my Successors the System has produced the most salutary Effects. The Province of Burdwan exhibits the Face of a Garden, whilst the more fertile Provinces of Bengal are declining.

## No. 6. Supervisorships.

[The following documents are from the correspondence of the Secret Committee at Calcutta, and include a letter from the Resident, the instructions issued to the Supervisors, and a Resolution defining their powers.]

*I. O. Records*, Range A. 9; Consultations of July 8, 1769.

*Letter from Becher, Resident at Murshidabad.*

May 24, 1769.

It must give pain to an Englishman to have Reason to think that since the accession of the Company to the Dewannee the condition of the people of this Country has been worse than it was before; and yet I am afraid the Fact is undoubted, and I believe has proceeded from the following causes—the Mode of providing the Company's Investment, the Export of Specie instead of importing large Sums annually; the Strictness that has been observed in the Collections; the Endeavour of all concerned to gain Credit by an Increase of Revenue during the Time of their being in Station without sufficiently attending to what future Consequences might be expected from such a Measure; the Errors that subsist in the Manner of making the Collections, particularly by the Employment of Aumils: these appear to me the principal Causes why this fine Country which flourished under the most despotic and arbitrary Government, is verging towards its Ruin while the English have really so great a share in the Administration. . . .

In Ali Verdi Cawn's Time the amount of the Revenue paid into the Treasury, was much less than what comes in at present, but then the Zemindars, Shroffs, Merchants etc. were rich, and would at any Time when an Emergency required it supply the Nabob with a large Sum, which they frequently did, particularly when he was at war with the Marattoes. The Custom then was to settle a Malguzarry with the different Zemindars on moderate terms: the Nabob abided by his Agreement; the Zemindars had a natural Interest in their Districts, and gave proper encouragement to the Ryotts, when

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

necessary would wait for their Rents, and borrow Money to pay their own Malguzarry punctually. There were in all Districts Shroffs ready to lend Money to the Zemindars when required, and even to the Ryotts which enabled many to cultivate their Grounds, which otherwise they could not have done. This Mode of Collection and a free Trade which was carried on in such a Manner that the Ballance proved greatly in its favour, made this Country flourish even under an arbitrary Government, and at a Time when a large Tract of it was annually invaded by the Marattoes, who burnt and destroyed all they could come at, the poor Inhabitants flying for shelter to the principal Cities, European Factorys etc. The Swelling of the Rivers at the Approach of the Rains always obliged the Marattoes to retire and the Inhabitants were again secure till January. They having Encouragement set immediately to work, and endeavoured to get their crops in, and sent to Market before the Time returned for the apprehended Invasion: insomuch that even under such Circumstances the Country was in a flourishing State and the Zemindars etc. able to pay the Nabob his Requisition (Account his extraordinary Expence in keeping so large an Army to oppose the Marattoes)[1] the enormous sum of one Crore at one time, and 50 lacks at another, besides paying the Malguzarry. I mention this only with a view of showing what this fine Country is capable of under proper Management. When the English received the Grant of the Dewannee their first Consideration seems to have been the raising of as large Sums from the Country as could be collected, to answer the pressing demands from home and to defray the large Expences here. The Zemindars not being willing or able to pay the Sums required, Aumils have been sent into most of the Districts. These Aumils on their Appointment agree with the Ministers to pay a fixed sum for the Districts they are to go to, and the man that has offered most has generally been preferred. What a destructive system is this for the poor Inhabitants! the Aumils have no Connexion or natural Interest in the Welfare of the Country where they make the Collections, nor have they any Certainty of holding their Places beyond the Year: the best Recommendation they can have is to pay up their Kistbundees punctually, to which purpose they fail not to rack the Country whenever they find they cant otherwise pay their Kists and secure a handsome sum for themselves. Uncertain in their Office, and without Opportunity of acquiring Money after their Dismission. can it be doubted that the future Welfare of the Country

[1] i. e. 'his requisition on account of'.

is not an Object with them? nor is it to be expected in Human Nature. These Aumils also have had no Check upon them during the Time of their Employment; they appoint those that act under them; so that during the Time of the Year's Collection their power is absolute. There is no fixed Hustabood by which they are to collect, nor any likelihood of Complaints till the poor Ryott is really drove to Necessity by having more demanded of him than he can possibly pay. Much these poor Wretches will bear rather than quit their Habitations to come here to complain, especially when it is to be considered that it must always be attended with loss of Time, risk of obtaining Redress, and a certainty of being very ill-used should the Aumil's influence be sufficient to prevent the poor Man's obtaining Justice or even Access to those able to grant it to him. On this destructive Plan with a continual Demand for more Revenues have the Collections been made ever since the English have been in possession of the Dewannee. . . .

. . . Whenever the Court of Directors shall think proper to avow the Management of the Revenues I think it cannot admit of Doubt, that the Plan to be pursued throughout the whole Country should be the same as is now practised at Burdwan; vizt. letting the Lands out to farm for at least 3 years with an assurance that those who behave well, and give proper Encouragement to their Ryotts, should always have the preference in remaining Farmers of those Lands, when their Leases expired. This Method and English Gentlemen appointed to superintend the Collections, and administration of Justice has occasioned the province of Burdwan to flourish, when the Countrys adjacent to it under the Government of the Ministers are in a very declining State. . . . Other necessary Steps to be taken are to have as great a Check on the Collectors as you possibly can, and to endeavour to fix the Rate of Collections in such a Manner, that the Ryott may know as early as possible in the Season what the Collector has a right to demand of him, and no further demand should be made on any Account whatever. The present destructive Scheme of adding Demand on Demand under the name of Matute, has been a material cause of the present distressed State of the Country and I wish the word could be abolished and never heard of more.

[For Becher's opinion of the plan of Supervisors, drawn up in response to this appeal, the Consultations of the Secret Committee of September 25, 1769, should be consulted. He considers it a good plan, but holds that it ought to be deferred

till the close of that year's Collections and that Supervisors must have power to control the Collections. He asks :—]

Where are they to get their intelligence? Must it not be from the Aumils, Mohores, etc., employed in the Collections? must they not have Inspection of their Accounts? is this to be done without interfering and giving those employed a Pretence to withhold what they have engaged to pay?

[Further reasons for delay appear in the Consultations of October 12.]

### *Orders to the Supervisors.*

[These were issued on August 16, 1769; they are too long for insertion, but the following summary seems indispensable.]

*I. O. Records*, Range A. 9; Secret Committee Consultation. August 16, 1769.

Resolved :

That in every province or district a Gentleman in the Service be appointed, whose Office is to be subordinate to the Resident of the Durbar and managed as is expressly set forth . . . in the following Letter of Instructions :—

. . . the Services expected from you in your department [are]—

1st . . . A Summary History of the Province etc. . . ., from the Time of Sujah Cawn.[1]

2nd . . . The State, Produce and Capacity of the Lands. . . .

3rd . . . The Amount of Revenues, the Cesses or Arbitrary Taxes etc. . . .

4th . . . The Regulation of Commerce . . . an Estimate of the productions of every District, Amount of Manufactures, Number of Manufacturers employed in each Branch, annual Duties collected on them, Rise and Fall in Demand etc. . . . to lay open and abolish the several Species of Imposition.

5th . . . The Administration of Justice . . . to enforce Justice where the Law demands it, checking every Composition by Fine or Mulct, where any disputes arise in matters of property you should recommend the method of Arbitration. [Records and Pottahs to be registered in the principal Cutcherry and a copy deposited at Muxadavad.]

Versed as you are in the language, depend on none where you yourself can possibly hear and determine. Let access to you be easy, and be careful of the conduct of your dependents. Aim at no undue Influence yourself and check it in all others.

[1] Probably Shuja-ud-Din is intended, Nawab of Bengal 1726–1740. He held Bahar also from 1735.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

*I. O. Records*, Range A. 9.

[A further important Resolution was passed in December to clear up points of difficulty that had already arisen.]

December 15, 1769.

Resolved:

That the Supervisors shall for the present have as little to do with the Collections as possible; in order that they may not be encumbered in the important Researches they will be directed to make; but in order to give their Authority its necessary weight and to prevent the Aumils or Zemindars from counteracting their measures, the Supervisors should have a Controuling though not an immediate, active power over the Collections; or in other words the Aumils, Zemindars or other Officers superintending them should be ordered to consult and mutually act on every occasion with, and report all Transactions to the Supervisors; and in case that points of difference should arise, the Supervisor must have a negative Voice until he can report his reasons for such negative to the Resident at the Durbar, and receive from him the orders of the Ministry on the occasion.—The Supervisors should also have the same negative Voice in all judicial Proceedings. In every Zemindary or hereditary Possession all proceedings whatever should be transacted in the name of such Zemindar, as in Burdwan. In every Phouzdary where Aumils are employed although the Supervisors have the controuling power, yet all Proceedings relating to the Revenue are to pass in their joint names—but in every judicial Transaction must pass in the name of the Phouzdar, Aumil or in that of the Ministry. . . . to restrict the Supervisors from the general benefit of Trade, so long as it does not rise to the one [i. e. to a monopoly] or counteract the other [i. e. Commerce], is not the Intention of this Committee—but [they are] enjoined to avoid all appearance of Pomp and Parade whatsoever.

[The names of the Supervisors first appointed, which are to be found in the Consultations of April 28, 1770.]

*I. O. Records*, Range A. 10.

April 28, 1770.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Mr. Rider. | Mr. Alexander. | Mr. Grose. |
| ,, Ducarel. | ,, Kelsall. | ,, G. Vansittart. |
| ,, Rous. | ,, C. Stuart. | ,, Graham. |
| ,, Harwood. | ,, Wilmot. | ,, Becher, Resident. |

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

*Effect of the Supervisorship. Reports of the Resident.*

*I. O. Records*, Range A. 10, p. 348, &c.

June 9, 1770.

. . . Certain it is that the Zemindars, Aumils and Farmers appear unwilling to enter into any Engagements for the Revenues of the approaching Season unless they can be assured of being supported in their Authority in the province and suffered to make their Collections without Interruptions from the Supervisors or their People—as certain it is, that they do complain of having met with Interruptions lately—their credit is entirely stopped. . . . No Shroff or Merchant will advance a Rupee till they know whether the People to whom they advance their Money are to be invested with Authority to collect their own Revenues or not. . . .

. . . I now could wish, that the Supervisors having the Management of the Revenues might be delayed till next Year. . . . the Point with me, is to judge whether Young Gentlemen, with little Experience themselves, attended by Black Dependents, and Banians chiefly from Calcutta, and of course unacquainted in the Affairs of the Collection are capable to manage the Revenues?

June 21, 1770.

. . . On the Footing you have directed the Supervisors to remain, the Business of the Collections cannot proceed. . . . Business is at a stand whilst the Season is advancing and the Revenue in a very precarious State. [He had proposed Settlements which were agreed to on condition of non-interference: had empowered experienced men, G. Vansittart, Stuart, Ducarel, and Graham, to make the settlements themselves. All this had been quashed by the Council's letter of June 9.]

Farmers on long leases or that have reasonable Expectations of retaining their Farms will for their own sakes be induced to use their Ryotts well, to encourage Cultivation and to pay their Kists punctually to Government. Proceeding by degrees everything may be accomplished to our Wish. By attempting the Whole at once we may sustain a great Loss and probably prejudice the whole Supervising Plan by part of it being ill-conducted for want of Experience and Knowledge of the Business . . . it remains with you to set this great

Machine in Motion, on your present Plan it will not go; you must either proceed further and have the Supervisors to make the Settlements in the different Districts or you must recede in part for the present.

[The result was that the Secret Committee acquiesced and withdrew the supervisors' powers; but an altercation arose between it and the Council, and the latter created Revenue Councils at Murshidabad and Patna.]

## No. 7. Reports of the Famine of 1770.

### *Report from Mohamed Ali Khan, Faujdar of Purnea, to Mr. Becher, Resident at Murshidabad.*

*I. O. Records*, Range A. 10, p. 195.

April 28, 1770.

Purnea, which was once a plentiful Country, retains now nothing but the Name of its former Abundance— I have so often expatiated to you on the distressful Condition of this District, that I am ashamed to repeat my Representations; nor can the full Extent of our Misery possibly gain credit with you untill someone in whom you can confide is sent from the City to be an eyewitness of it.

The Distress of the Poor is now beyond Description, hardly a day passes over without 30 or 40 people dying. . . .

From the Drought of the Season such Misery is occasioned that Multitudes have and continue to perish of Hunger— Intent on the Prosperity of the Country I have not been wanting in my Endeavours to preserve the necessary Grain for Seed—but the Ryotts of many Villages for want of Rain have been reduced to the necessity of selling their Grain for Seed, and their Cattle and Utensils in order to support themselves; insomuch that they even offer their Children for Sale, but none can be found to buy them.

### *Report from Ujagger Mull, Amil of Jessore.*

What can I write of Dearness and Scarcity? Mankind are employed in bringing the Leaves of Trees from the Jungles for Food, and they offer their Sons and Daughters to Sale— Many of the Ryotts are daily running away and vain are all my endeavours to restrain them.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

*Report of Mr. Ducarel to Mr. Becher.*

*I. O. Records*, Range A. 10, p. 199.

April 28, 1770.

February 16, 1770.

I am sorry to inform you that the Situation of Misery in which I have found Purnea is not less striking than that of the Pergunnahs— The first Object I have had to attend to was to guard against the Horrors of Pestilence being added to those of Famine; by providing for the removal of the Number of Dead Bodies, which were laying [*sic*] in different Parts of the Town, and with which the Air was infected to a very great Degree—the Report of the Number that has been buried for these three days past exceeds one Thousand. . . .

I do not believe I should exaggerate in saying that half the Ryotts were dead . . . from what I have seen I should judge the Number to be rather more than less.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

# CHAPTER IV

## HASTINGS'S FIRST OFFICES

**Hastings as Resident—Mir Kasim's government—Trade disputes and war—Hastings returns and gives evidence before the House of Commons—Appointed to Madras—Governor of Bengal—Scope of his task.**

WHAT had been happening to Hastings during these critical years, and what part had he played?

In January 1757 the Company's servants were gathered in Calcutta. William Watts, Hastings's chief before the disaster, was now on the Council Board, but on February 14, 1757, that body announced the conclusion of peace and at once appointed the following servants to resume occupation of the up-country factories, which it decided not to garrison.

Mr. Harry Smith was appointed to Luckipore.

Messrs. Sumner and Waller were appointed to Dacca.

Messrs. Boddam and Playdell were appointed to Ballasore.

Messrs. W. Watts, W. Hastings, M. Collet, and F. Sykes were appointed to Kasimbazar.

W. Watts was sent to negotiate the execution of the treaty of peace with Siraj-ud-Daula, and was only given the rank of chief at Kasimbazar to add to his importance in native eyes; Hastings, as export ware-housekeeper, was the acting chief.[1] On March 9, 1757, Watts reported his arrival, but there is no entry in the books of the factory until August 24, 1757. During this interval Clive, acting on the reports of Watts and Luke Scrafton,[2] who was at Murshidabad to receive the payments required of the Nawab, had attacked the French, and the campaign of Plassey resulted in May. During the summer Mir Jafar was established, and on October 2 Watts was recalled to Calcutta. He therefore made over the formal

[1] *Bengal Public Consultations*, Range I. 29, pp. 34–62.

[2] *Factory Records: Kasimbazar*, Range 30. 12, p. 23 (see end of volume); *Orme MSS. India*, vol. xvi, p. 1.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

charge of the factory to Warren Hastings, and although continuing nominal chief was employed henceforth in negotiations between the two lords of the Dual Government. Scrafton remained at the durbar till August 12, 1758, when Hastings succeeded him as Resident, with Clive's recommendation to the Nawab.[1] In his new post Hastings had full scope not merely for his commercial abilities as chief of the capital factory of Bengal, but also as diplomatist and statesman in conducting the all-important negotiations with Mir Jafar and Mir Kasim, through the influence of which their successive Governments were directed in the interests of the East India Company. Few young men of five-and-twenty have been placed in a more responsible and delicate position: it recalls that of the younger Pitt, Prime Minister at twenty-one. It was now Hastings's business to study the intricate political schemes of parties at Court, the working of the native administrative bodies, and the effect upon them of the new and anomalous influence which the English had obtained by their victory. His position was merely that of an agent with no control over the English policy. He had to carry out the instructions of the President and Council, and to watch the effect of their measures. But it is very plain from the documents that he formed strong views, and did not hesitate to express them to his superiors. He saw with anxiety the confusion that arose; he deplored the excesses of the private traders and the extortion practised by the native officials; he entered into the difficulties which hampered the native Government and urged upon his superiors the need for strengthening its hands. And it was this sympathy with native difficulties that caused him to take a strong attitude on the most vital question of the time, that of the deposition of Mir Jafar in favour of Mir Kasim. This desire of Hastings's to purify and reform the condition of Bengal comes out very clearly in the successive negotiations in which he was engaged from 1758 to 1764. His first duty was to see that the revenues of Burdwan, Midnapore, and Chittagong, assigned to the Com-

[1] *Factory Records: Kasimbazar*, Range 30. 13, January 26, February 1, 1759; Gleig, vol. i, p. 55; *Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, vol. i, p. 2, No. 22.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

pany in payment of the Nawab's debts, were raised in full and made over without deduction.

The three districts were on the borders of the Nawab's territory, and held by semi-independent Rajas, not by Zemindars of the usual type. Burdwan and Midnapore, with Kishnagar, lay along the bank of the Hugli opposite Calcutta; Chittagong was beyond the Brahmapootra, south-east of Dacca. The amounts due from the former districts were forty-two lacs of rupees; that from Chittagong in 1759 was 3,31,529 : 1 : 15 sicca rupees,[1] another three lacs.

The collection was in the hands of native agents when Hastings received his appointment, but was soon after taken over by the English, who report to their employers on August 26, 1758, 'They collect the revenues of the several places themselves in discharge of the sums due by the Treaty'.[2]

Arrears had accumulated under the native collectors, and Hastings was not such an adept at extortion as readers of Mill and Macaulay have been led to suppose. Clive himself writes to stiffen the young Resident's methods, bids him to be a little severe, and says, 'these people will do nothing through inclination. Ten sepoys now and then will greatly expedite payment.' He adds that nothing but fear will make the Mussulmans do justice to the Company's claims. Clive was at this time writing to the Directors urging the need for reinforcements. He says, 'The Revenues assigned for discharging the sums to be paid by the Treaty are collected with little interruption and there is no doubt of the performance of the whole if the repeatedly requested troops are sent'.[3]

The Directors, however, were slow in sending reinforcements, and Hastings realized that under the native tenure of the lands it would be impossible to exert sufficient pressure. He therefore negotiated with the Nawab and Kasim Ali the transfer of the districts to the English Company as a Zemindari.[4] It is interesting to note that during a leave of absence in this year Hastings was replaced at the Residency by

[1] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. iv, p. 96.
[2] *I. O. Records*, Abstract Coast and Bay, vol. i, p. 220.
[3] *I. O. Records*, Abstract Coast and Bay, vol. i, November 9, 1758.
[4] Aitcheson, *Treaties, Engagements, and Sunnuds*, vol. vi, p. 47.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Francis Sykes, afterwards prominent in the conduct of the Dual System, and we learn from him[1] that Hastings, 'who spoke the language perfectly, was employed to translate the grant' of Clive's jagir.

In 1760 Henry Vansittart succeeded Clive in the Presidency, and as Mir Jafar expressed it, 'it seemed as though the soul had departed from the body.' Vansittart's rule lacked strength; though upright, he was not resolute. He had been brought by Clive from Madras and set over the heads of Bengal servants, and their resentment showed itself in opposition to his measures.

Meanwhile a serious intrigue was afoot in Murshidabad. Mir Jafar's son-in-law, Kasim Ali, and Rajabullub, the guardian of Mir Kasim's nephews and rivals, were disputing the vacant post of Commander-in-Chief of the Nawab's forces, which would carry with it the disposal of the succession; and already in Bihar and the outlying parts of Bengal the Nawab's vassals began to throw off his enfeebled authority.

Mir Jafar feared his powerful and capable son-in-law, but Kasim's cause was strongly urged upon him by the Calcutta Board. Yet Vansittart, always averse to strong measures, hesitated to intervene openly or to assume for the Company the undisguised responsibility of forcing the Nawab's hand in a matter of internal politics. Hastings at last wrote forcibly to his chiefs, 'Permit me to say, whether Cossim Ali Cawn or Rajebullub be the man, it is necessary Your Honours' declaration in favour of the one or the other should immediately determine this contention'. Thereupon Vansittart repaired to the capital in person, and Mir Jafar abdicated in favour of Mir Kasim.[2]

[1] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. iii, p. 154.

[2] The following account of Vansittart is taken from a contemporary pamphlet, *Observations on the Present State of the East India Company*, by N. Smith, Chairman of Directors in 1784. It is in the India Office Library.

'I have always been impressed with the highest opinion of Vansittart's honour, integrity and great goodness of heart. I believe he was guided in every action of his life, by a love of justice, moderation and benevolence, which were easily to be distinguished in every public and in every private step. He excelled in commercial knowledge; he was not only master of every branch of trade throughout India, but no man was better acquainted with the general principles of commerce; and though his natural abilities

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

There is no doubt that Hastings, even if he had not, as Burke declared, 'the ground prepared and smoothed', certainly advised and approved this change of ruler. The remarkable study of Kasim's character by Hastings (p. 68) shows that he had formed a high idea of his ability and considered that his failure as Nawab and his violent enmity to the English were alike due to the unfair and provocative treatment which he received at their hands. The reason for it lay in the self-interested and short-sighted policy of a party in the Calcutta Council headed by Amyatt, the senior member, who had been disappointed of the Presidency by the appointment of Vansittart. Kasim's chief aim was to reconstitute the authority of the Nizamut and to check the excesses of the English in the provinces, but these men resented every measure which threatened their unrighteous gains, and repeatedly persuaded the Council to counteract them. In vain Kasim argued and expostulated and took measures of his own to end the dispute; his opponents left him no course but complete surrender or open defiance, and the blame was theirs rather than his when his indignation broke out in war.

A further stage in Hastings's career had now been reached. In February 1761[1] he succeeded to a place at Vansittart's Council Board as Assistant under the President. Now the convictions which for three years had been growing within him could find utterance and have a direct influence on the policy of the Board. There was full scope for all Hastings's energies in the Governor's support. Vansittart himself, upright and reasonable as he was, attempted to support the new Nawab in his reforms, but he was opposed by the interested turbulence of the majority of his Councillors. Led by Amyatt and influenced by Ellis,[2] Messrs. Hay,[3] Batson,[4] Johnstone,[5]

fitted him for higher knowledge, yet as a politician he had little skill, for he was unacquainted with human nature and was irresolute, suffering himself to be influenced on many occasions by men whose judgement was inferior to his own: in his politics he grievously erred, every capital measure he took was imprudent to the last degree. Even Cossim, under a Clive, would have been subservient to our interests.'

[1] *Bengal Letters received*, No. 10, see date.

[2] Chief at Kasimbazar in 1759–60, and in 1761 Collector of Rents and Revenues. [3] William Hay, Provincial Chief at Patna 1761, killed 1763.

[4] Chief at Kasimbazar. [5] Resident at Midnapore.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

and Major Carnac opposed every proposal likely to increase the Nawab's powers. They wished Ellis to be given authority to restrain Kasim's use of the English troops in Bihar. Hastings and others protested against such a claim, and asserted the Council to be the proper judge. The truth was that these men feared to see military power in the hands of the ruler, lest it should be used to check the corrupt gains they were making under cover of the dustuk.

The main contest in the Council was on this vexed question. The majority refused to pay any customs dues to the Nizamut, pleading the various sanads received from the Moguls as covering both external and inland trade. Vansittart and Hastings challenged this contention. Of the Company's early practice Hastings declared: 'Then the trade in such commodities as were bought and sold in the country was entirely confined to the natives; they were either farmed out or circulated through the province by the poorer sort of people, to whom they afforded a subsistence. The privileges therefore claimed by the Company and allowed by the Government, were originally designed by both for goods brought into the country, or purchased in it for exportation; in effect it was ever limited to that; nor can any difference of *power* convey to us a *right* which we confessedly wanted before.'[1]

Kasim Ali meawhile was vehemently protesting and instructing his peons to stop boats concerned in this traffic. The offenders retaliated by accusing his officers of insolence and threatening to resist them by force. They refused to admit that Englishmen were subject to the jurisdiction of the Nizamut, and even allowed their gomastahs to sit in judgement on the native officials. The contention at the Council Board grew ever hotter. The maintenance of a due subordination to the existing Government is the principle maintained in a joint letter written on December 15, 1762, by Vansittart and Hastings to their employers at home on the subject of this trade: 'The honour and dignity of our nation would be better maintained by scrupulous restraint of the dustuck than by extending it beyond its usual bounds; and by putting our

[1] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. iii, p. 485.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

gomastahs under some checks. If it should appear that this trade cannot be carried on without investing our gomastahs with an armed force, and authority to exercise that force over the inhabitants at their discretion, it should be forbid; and we content ourselves with carrying on our trade as far as the Company carry theirs.'[1]

Hastings had been sent up to Monghyr in the April of this year to negotiate an accommodation with the Nawab. He recognized that Kasim was a ruler worth conciliating. Already he had restored order among his native subjects, improved his revenue, suppressed disaffection among his troops, and made sound terms with his neighbours. On the journey to his Court Hastings saw ample evidence of the abuses. The English flag flew on every boat and store-shed without warrant, sepoys plundered at will, presuming on English influence, and in fine the English name was made a shield for every kind of disorder and breach of the Nawab's authority.[2] The negotiation of a treaty with Kasim was successfully concluded, and Hastings returned to Calcutta only to have it repudiated by the Council, in defiance alike of the President and the Nawab. The majority went so far as to demand complete freedom from native control. They maintained that the attacks upon the gomastahs were trumped up by the native Amils, &c., to screen their own oppressions.[3] Hastings's protest is forcibly expressed in a minute dated March 3, 1763:

It is now proposed absolving every person in our service from the jurisdiction of the Government. This it is true will prevent their suffering any oppression; but it gives them a full license of oppressing others, since, whatever crimes they may commit, the magistrate must patiently look on, nor dare even to defend the lives and properties of the subjects committed to his care, without a violation of our rights and privileges. Such a system of government cannot fail to create in the minds of the wretched inhabitants an abhorrence of the English name and authority, and how would it be

[1] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. iii, pp. 344, 486.
[2] Gleig, vol. i, p. 108.
[3] *Vide Calendar of Persian Correspondence*, vol. , p. 150, &c.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

possible for the Nawab, whilst he hears the cries of his people which he cannot redress, not to wish to free himself from an alliance which subjects him to such indignities?

The President vainly arranged checks on both native and English disputants; it was clear that his will could not prevail over his subordinates', and the Nawab at last took a short way with the English monopolists by declaring all dues abolished for a term of two years. With unheard-of effrontery the Councillors demanded that he should reimpose them. Hastings's protest was vigorous: 'The Nawab has granted a boon to his subjects, and there are no grounds for demanding that a sovereign prince should withdraw such a boon, or for threatening him with war in the event of refusal.' Accused of want of patriotism because he would have the English submit, Hastings was roused to fight a duel in defence of his attitude. A born fighter, he would not abate one jot of his just cause to placate the party of corruption, but abandoned one expedient for foiling them only to invent another, until by the violent and ill-judged attempt to capture the city of Patna and hold it against his prince, Ellis made all hope of agreement for ever impossible and forced his most determined opponents to make common cause to avenge the ensuing massacre of Englishmen. Hastings's own words, written ten days later, tell us how he received this news:[1]

It was my intention to resign ... being unwilling on the one hand to give authority to past measures of which I disapproved, and a new establishment which I judged detrimental to the honour and interests of the Company, and apprehensive on the other, that my continuance at the Board might serve only to prejudice rather than advance the good of the service, in keeping alive by my presence the disputes which have so long disturbed our councils.... But since our late melancholy advices give us reason to apprehend a dangerous and troublesome war ... it is become the duty of every British subject to unite in support of the common cause. It is my intention to join my endeavour for the good of the service, not as long as the war should last, but as long as the troubles consequent from it may endanger the Company's affairs.

[1] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. iii, p. 359.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

By the end of 1763 Mir Kasim had been hunted into Oudh and Mir Jafar reinstated as Nawab. A year later Kasim's ally, the Vizier, was overthrown, Oudh in the hands of the English, and the Mogul their pensioner. The conditions Hastings had laid down were thus fulfilled, and he resigned office with his superior, Vansittart, and left Bengal on December 20, 1764.

It was no wonder if Hastings was disillusioned and glad to close his career in India. The fourteen years he had now spent there had been arduous in the extreme, full at times of danger and constantly of ignoble intrigue and strife with natives or with Englishmen, while the work accomplished for his employers might satisfy even his exacting conscience. Nor was he without material reward, if we may accept the statement of a contemporary and friend that 'he was possessed as he supposed of a fortune of £30,000—£5,000 of which accompanied him'.[1] Had this been net gain, it would not have been a large amount as Indian fortunes were then reckoned. We need not on this account suspect Hastings of having shared in the ill practices of his compeers. He had not been concerned in the nefarious provision of the Investment. He wrote at a later date with regard to his position at Kasimbazar, 'I can safely swear that I neither gained nor looked to gain a rupee from the Investment itself. My profits arose from a different source.'[2] There is evidence in his correspondence that he joined in the private trade between Calcutta and Madras; he may have made ventures in the China trade, possibly in opium; these were legitimate resources. He certainly did deal in diamonds, sending them home to be sold in London. The cleanness of his hands was notorious (p. 104).

Of the years that Hastings spent in England, almost all record has vanished. This is the more disappointing since what few fragments there are suggest that this was a turning-point in his career. How did it come about that the man who in 1764 abandoned the Company's service, disillusioned, and returned to England with the discredited Governor, Vansittart,

[1] British Museum Add. MS. 29209, No. 9, p. 196. [2] Gleig, vol. iii, p. 279.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

103070

found himself eight years later installed in his place, and with far greater scope than Vansittart ever had to put reforms in motion?

It was not the result of an assiduous courting of great personages, though it was at this time that Hastings came to the notice of such men as North and Mansfield, probably also Rockingham and Burke, and had intercourse with Dr. Johnson and the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University; his means were quite insufficient to procure patronage by the common avenues of the time. The £25,000 of which he thought himself possessed in India were never realized; partly through the default of his debtors, partly through the drain of debts he had himself incurred in his somewhat haphazard business undertakings. Nor could he look to the Directors for favour. They refused to readmit him to their employment, when in 1767 he learnt that his fortune had vanished.[1] The only clue to his promotion lies in the scanty evidence relating to an inquiry held by the House of Commons into the affairs of the East India Company—the first of many.[2] On March 6, 1767, Vansittart, Holwell, Warren Hastings, Eyre Coote, and others were ordered to attend at the bar of the House on the 20th. A pamphlet memoir of Hastings, written about 1820, has the following passage: 'Mr. Hastings being examined at the bar of the House of Commons during an enquiry into the affairs of the Company, attracted general notice by his prompt, masterly and intelligent expositions.'[3]

Unfortunately the only report of this inquiry related to dividends, and the only account of the evidence is in the general terms of the First Report of the House of Commons Committee of 1772. Hastings's previous experience and character fitted him to lay bare the real causes of distress in Bengal, the needs of the ryot, the lack of an authority to control the native agents, the licence into which a sudden accession of sovereign power had betrayed the English, and

[1] Gleig says, alluding to a rumour of this loss, 'I cannot give the statement as a fact'. The evidence for it is to be found among Hastings's papers. Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 29209, No. 9, p. 196.

[2] *House of Commons Journals*, vol. xxxi, p. 25.

[3] *Memoirs of Warren Hastings*, by P. C.; Brit. Mus. 10803 e. 16. 4.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

his strictures, we may be sure, would be aimed not at men but measures. They evidently won for him the interest of important Directors, such as Sir G. Colebrooke, L. Sulivan, and J. Purling, with whom, when Chairman, he afterwards corresponded, and the still more valuable recognition of such leading men as Lords North and Mansfield. The claim of the Crown to the new dominions was already being canvassed, and Hastings was probably of the same opinion as Clive and might well consider State control to be the most direct way to secure reforms. In any case it seems clear that it was the impression produced on this occasion which led the Court of Directors in 1768 to reconsider his claims to a new appointment. A change had just occurred in the Directorate, where hotly partisan bodies had been disputing the question of the rate of dividend to be declared, one party accusing the other of decrying the stock with a view to speculation. The outgoing clique had been deaf to Hastings's earlier request, for they upheld the inland traders, and he was already committed to a policy of reform. The new Directors sympathized, and he now received the appointment of second at Madras under Josias Dupré, with a title to the succession, and the particular charge of the investment as warehouse-keeper. He set out in March 1769, and for two years acted as right-hand man to the President in important negotiations with the Nabob of Arcot and in reforming the Madras investment. In this department private interest had encroached on that of the Company, and oppression of the weavers had become the rule. Hastings bent his energies to securing their protection. By introducing the gomastah system of providing cloths he purified the commercial service. He placed the purveyance of the investment goods in the hands of a trusty subordinate, C. Smith, with full power to control the conduct of the gomastahs and so prevent oppression. Hastings's report on the subject shows a statesmanlike appreciation of the relations at which the Company should aim with the Nawab on the one hand, and with the peasantry on the other. The iniquity of the native administration made it hard for the Company to secure equity in the treatment of those who worked for them, and Hastings

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

vainly desired in Madras what he was fortunately able to effect in Bengal, English responsibility for the government of the provinces. His work in Madras was thus placing the coping-stone on his training for the administration of Bengal. Dupré, like all who worked closely with him, became Hastings's firm friend and adviser, and their later correspondence sheds much light on the all-important early years of his own government.

It was while he was at Madras that he was selected by the Court of Directors, with the approval of Lord North and the King, to reform Bengal.[1] Lord North already held the opinion of him which he expressed two years later in public. On the passing of his Regulating Act in 1773, he stated in the House that as first Governor-General 'he should propose a Person, who though flesh and blood, had resisted the greatest temptations—that tho' filling great Offices in Bengal during the various Revolutions that had been felt in that Country, never received a single Rupee at any one of them, and whose Abilities and intense application would be apparent to any gentleman who would consider what he had done during the first six months of his Administration'.[2]

Such was the man to whom was to be entrusted the work of cleansing the Augean stable of misrule in India. That misrule and the task that it presented to Hastings were not so much

[1] Gleig, vol. i, p. 471.

[2] The above speech is recorded in a sketch of Hastings's career, appended to *A Short Review of the Past and Present State of the British Empire in India* (*vide* Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 29209, 9). Judging from internal evidence the Review must have been written in 1790, and the author of this note must have been a member of the House of Commons and a friend of Hastings. He adds the following remarks:

'N.B. During our debates in the Commons—I put it once to Lord North how he could possibly come forward as a Minister and propose Mr. Hastings to be a second—a third—and a fourth time Governor-General of Bengal, that is in 1779, 1780 and 1781—if he entertained sentiments of him different from what he did in 1773. Lord North replied that tho' there were some parts of Mr. Hastings' conduct which he disapproved, particularly the Rohilla War—he had [manuscript is here damaged] for others—that it was true he had proposed his reappointments at the periods I mentioned and he had done so because Mr. Hastings was a Man of great firmness and Abilities, who possessed the confidence of the East India Co. and because it was in a season of war—of *Difficulty—danger* and *distress*. These I believe are exactly the words he used.'

NATIONAL ARCHIVE OF INDIA

due to the misdeeds of individuals as to the clash of irreconcilable elements; a purely mercantile community forced to step into the place of a decaying Government, ignorant of the customs, the religions, and the social habits of its peoples: neither acknowledging nor even recognizing any responsibility to its subjects, and yet wielding in reality a power over them as unrestrained as the most absolute of despotisms. Hastings's task, as time would prove it, was to reconcile these opposites and to build upon them the foundations of Empire: but in the eyes of the Directors and shareholders it was to make the East India Company pay. And even that task, taken at its lowest estimate, was no easy one. To make the trade flourish again, its agents must devote themselves to it, and not to their own interests; but already they complained that fortunes were no longer to be made in India: and they were the very men on whom the reformer must rely to get his measures passed and put into execution, his fellow countrymen, on whom alone he had a claim for assistance; to alienate them at the outset would be fatal. Again, this trade had its sources in the fertility of Bengal, and that fertility depended on the welfare of the cultivating ryots. But the ryots were being driven to destitution and vagabondage by the oppression of the officials, the extravagance and profligacy of the princes, the ravages of war and drought. To restore the resources of a naturally luxuriant country would thus involve no less than a fundamental reorganization of the entire State. The officials must be placed under an efficient control, the princes rendered innocuous, the system of finance rehabilitated, judicial protection established, and the security of person and property restored; and all this was impossible without a reform of military affairs, for the army was the ultimate basis of the whole edifice. If Hastings was to satisfy the demands of his employers, he must do no less than create afresh the entire system of government of Bengal. He must penetrate the baffling complexities and contradictions of the ancient growth he sought to replace, must understand and enter into the traditions, the prejudices, the habits of a mass of peoples of immemorial age and unexampled tenacity, whose

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

deepest and most ineradicable convictions and tendencies were foreign to him and to those whose co-operation he required. Nor was he free to use his own judgement and carry out his own views. Far from it; the Directors' urgent need of funds bound him to place financial advantage and economy in the forefront of his programme; and this economy must be achieved by the aid of men whose main, if not their only, aim hitherto had been to enrich themselves and to enjoy the parade and luxury which, in their view, could alone compensate them for the isolation and discomforts of their life in India. Should he succeed in winning their goodwill and ready aid, still they were for the most part unpractised in governing; while if he turned to the natives, in whose hands the executive work had once lain, their experience, he well knew, had made them almost without exception adepts at intrigue, embezzlement, and the very malpractices he had set out to end. They were not even men of one race or bound by a common tie of patriotism. To invoke the love of country might well bring down nothing but hatred on the Englishmen who had exploited natives' disputes in order to despoil their land.

However stoutly supported at home, the strongest heart might without shame have quailed to set out on so hard a task as this, but instead of receiving support, Hastings was to be subjected to a fierce fire of criticism from potent but ill-informed authorities at home. The worst elements of the Bengal European community, finding their corrupt practices checked, came home to spend their days in spreading rancorous accounts of the new measures. Speculators in East India Stock combined with politicians, distracted by the ebb and flow of party strife, to hinder every effort at economy. Yet the thing was done, and done in two years; not indeed brought to full completion—to that many devoted lives had yet to contribute—but the morass was drained, the road marked out, and sound lines laid which survived the welter of ensuing disputes and made commerce and prosperity possible.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER IV

[These extracts about Hastings's work at Madras are interesting in two particulars. His report cannot be quoted at length, for it deals mainly with business details and is very voluminous, but the passages selected show the principles that guided his treatment of subordinates and the real understanding he had of the conditions of their service. To this consideration for their interests it was no doubt due that he found loyal assistants to conduct the various new branches of administration in Bengal. The second valuable passage is Hastings's pronouncement of the necessity of English control if the peasantry were to be freed from tyranny. On that position rests the justification for our presence in India, now as then.]

### Report on the Investment made by Hastings to the Council at Madras.

*Madras Records*, vol. 240, p. 32.

December 3, 1771.

. . . It is proper that I should now lay before your Honours an account of the manner in which I have endeavoured to execute your commands, and of the present form and state of the Investment, to which I shall beg leave to add some necessary observations respecting the general conduct of this business.

On May 2nd the Board came to the resolution that the Investment of the Presidency should be provided by gomastahs, and I was directed to carry their design into execution; it is not necessary to enter into the detail of the difficulties I met with or the steps I took in discharge of this trust—it was the interest of all the merchants and every native servant of the warehouse, and of the connexions of both, to counteract a design which tended to deprive them of their livelihood or emoluments. I expected therefore much opposition. . . .

. . . It will be apparent from the description I have given of the manner of providing cotton-thread that it is not a business of such a kind as can be managed by any temporary agent in the course of office—it requires the constant attention of a person who can find his own account in conducting it, who has a knowledge of the country, of the language of this particular subject and of business in general. . . .

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

The cotton-thread must have been provided by one of these three modes—by agency with a commission such as the present is, or by agency with a fixed salary, or by contract. If a fixed salary were allowed it would not have been made equal to the trouble, or even if equal it would be no inducement to the agent to give an extraordinary attention to the business entrusted to him, and in course of time it would be left to Comioplies or other inferior agents, and by accumulated charges, impositions in the price, embezzlements and bad debts the Company would probably lose instead of gaining by this article. If it were provided by contract, the contractor would require his own terms, and it is not likely they would be more advantageous to the Company than what are allowed to the agent, or the contract must have been given to the best bidder, and might fall to the lot of a person ill qualified for it. . . . The mode adopted substitutes the *interest* of the agent in place of his *duty*. The more diligence and attention he shows in his employ, the greater will be his profits and the greater, of course, those of the Company. . . . Though every man will think himself obliged to perform the ordinary duties of his station, yet few will be found actuated with so much zeal for the service of the Company as to sacrifice the care of their own concerns to it, and to devote the whole of their time, labour and attention to promote the interests of their employers, without the hope of some advantage to themselves.

The Company have ever shown a reluctance to the method of rewarding the diligence of their servants by fixed gratuities. Many obvious reasons may be assigned for this. Salaries given for particular services grow into the rights of office, and cease to be the incitements of industry. In a service constituted as the Company's is, they are besides too apparent for the jealousy of the public eye. Such emoluments as arise out of the services for which they are granted and which keep a proportion to the benefit derived to the Company from them, are most likely to animate the diligence and bind the fidelity of their servants as they are all most consonant to the spirit which seems to have guided our Honourable employers themselves in the dispensation of their bounty to their servants.

For the same reasons and because the business of the agent is subordinate and accountable to the warehouse-keeper, whose duty it more immediately is to attend to the due management of so valuable and important a part of the Investment, I have thought it both equitable and prudent to share the profits of the Commission equally between him and the agent, it will then become equally his interest, as it is the agent's, to

increase the profits in the thread, in which his *influence* may prove as effectual as the *diligence* of the agent. It will make it worth his while to increase the amount of the Investment, and he will be to a great degree responsible for the quality of the cloths, as that will depend principally on the goodness of the thread of which he has the provision.

I think it necessary to declare that (though warehouse-keeper) I have no interest in this proposition. I neither have nor will receive the benefit of a single fanam from any of the arrangements made or to be made. Had I been disposed to turn this trust to my own profit, it will easily be conceived that I might suppress the matter of the cotton-thread and have invested the profits of it to my own use, as a perquisite of office, without much hazard of detection or of censure if detected, letting it pass in account with the weavers, according to established custom, as so much cash received. The share of the agent, if the Board shall think proper to allow it, I have resigned to Mr. C. Smith, my deputy, I am much indebted to him for active and hearty assistance. . . . An entire change has taken place by which the interests of many are affected. The native servants have lost their livelihood and importance. They are all averse to the present system and would without doubt rejoice at any occasion that should overset it and restore the former practice of providing the Investment by contract. These men are related by cast, family or some other relation with most of the dubashes in the settlement, who will most probably adopt the same interest and inclinations, and all the arts of influence and intrigue will be employed to throw doubts, suspicions and difficulties upon the present forms of business. . . .

Every hope of this kind will be cut off by the appointment of Mr. C. Smith, the deputy warehouse-keeper, to succeed me in my employ. He has been personally instrumental in establishing the new mode, he will be more likely to adhere to the measures and will have a stronger interest in their success than any other person, less concerned in the previous transactions. The weavers will accustom themselves to the service of the Company when they find themselves supported and likely to continue in it, nor will the Investment be liable to interruption from any attempts to introduce other innovations which are never so dangerous as innovations already made. In my instructions to Mr. Smith I recommended it to him to find out some means if possible to confine the Company's Investment to certain entire villages and leave the rest to other purchasers. My intention in this was to facilitate the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

business of the Investment by bringing it into a closer compass, to prevent the confusion of accounts, embezzlements and bad debts arising from competitions, and to guard the character of the warehouse-keeper against the reproach imputable to him of employing the weavers for his own private account and using authority to exclude the merchants under colour and sanction of the Company's name. . . . Should the government and revenues of the Jagir ever be allowed to fall under the control of the Company's representatives, many privileges and humanities may be granted to the weavers which would reconcile them to the exclusive service of the Company, and by other general encouragements an ever greater number might be drawn to inhabit the Company's land; at least they might be exempted from those rigours which they now experience, and by which they are often driven from their habitations and would probably be compelled to desert the Jagir altogether, did not the neighbouring country offer them the prospect of greater want and severer oppression. . . . The weavers are, or ought to be, the strength of the Jagir. The weavers in general pay a tax to the government varying in different places, a tax which is never felt as an oppression because it is fixed, and is ever less in proportion to the industry of the proprietor. They are besides obliged to take their quota of the general distribution of grain belonging to the Circar, for which a price is exacted commonly about 20 % above its real or current value. This is a great oppression and is felt more severely because the assessment is altogether arbitrary . . . dependent on the mere will and authority of the amildar.

Thus much I will venture to affirm, that whatever grievances the inhabitants may or do suffer, no remedy can be applied to them while the country continues in the hands, and at the disposal of the Nabob: that is, while he pays for the right of oppressing it. . . .

This Government must ever subsist at the precarious will of the Nabob, unless it is possessed of some territory, or indirectly assumes the command of the resources of the Carnatic by its influence with the ruler of it, a mode liable to many dangers and inconveniences. A middle way might perhaps be found of freeing itself from that state of dependence and at the same time of leaving the Nabob the uncontrolled master of his own dominions by taking possession of the Jagir which would furnish the means of enlarging and improving the Investment; of improving the revenue by the repairing of tanks and of encouraging manufactures and trade, of providing for the

defence of the Settlement, and the lands adjoining to it, of laying up stores of grain against future scarcity, of acquiring the command of a numerous and contented people, and of every necessary and conveniency of life, which are now no more at your disposal than the daily allowance of rice which a slave receives from the necessary bounty of his master.

I am very respectfully,
Honourable Sir & Sirs
Your most obedient, humble servant
WARREN HASTINGS.

Fort St. George,
December 2, 1771.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

# CHAPTER V

## SITUATION OF EAST INDIA COMPANY

**Growth of public interest in India—The inquiry of 1767—The dispute about Dividend—The appointment of Commissioners—Objects and temper of the Court of Directors—The mandate to Hastings—His views and plans.**

THE Parliamentary inquiry which in 1767 had brought Warren Hastings into prominence was due to no momentary or individual action, soon to be laid aside and forgotten. The East India Company, hitherto able to keep its concerns out of the glare of publicity, was beginning to be an object of interest, if not to the general public, at least to that informed part of it which constituted 'the World' of eighteenth-century London. Perhaps the first thing to excite curiosity outside its own ranks was the attempt of the Company to prosecute certain of its servants. These were the members of Spencer's Council, who had all received huge presents for setting up the young Nawab, Nujum-ud-Daula, in 1765, just after the departure of Vansittart and Hastings. Owing to the wealth of the Councillors, the suit was afterwards dropped, but the temper of the partisans on either side spread the agitation among the public, and the further discussion of Clive's jagir kept it afoot. Men had begun to look upon India as a mine of inestimable fortunes, and rushed to buy the Company's stock, which rose in 1767 to the price of 263 per cent. The rate of dividend to be declared was a question that concerned the greatest. The Company's position became the burning topic of the day, and East India quotations were cried in the coffee-houses. There were many who, like Lord Verney or the Burkes, in 1769 lost large sums in the gamble;[1] and the

[1] Morley's *Burke*, p. 47; *Report of the Committee of Proprietors*, 1773, p. 29.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

public was always on the alert for news from India. But it is well to remember that news was only to be derived from sources tainted by the strongest party feeling. On the one hand the exaggerated reports of the so-called 'Nabobs', enriched by Indian spoils; on the other, the malicious inventions of disappointed or discredited adventurers served as authorities to the historian and the publicist.[1]

The Company's own Courts were divided into hostile camps, some urging that a dividend of 12½% should be declared, others pointing prudently to the diminishing receipts. The House of Commons inquiry led to another in the House of Lords, the upshot of which in 1767 was a Bill to restrain the dividend to a maximum of 10%, and to exact from the Company an annual payment of £400,000, which they were forced to raise by a loan. This was the first clear assertion of the Crown's right to intervene in the Company's affairs. It was in truth the beginning of the end, a Danegelt paid by the Directors to stave off the national appropriation of their territories. Their receipts are shown[2] to have exceeded two million pounds sterling annually. But the Company's finances were not in reality so sound as a mere statement of their net receipts would seem to imply: they knew it to be imperative that costly reforms should be set on foot to stem the exhaustion of the country. They had endeavoured to initiate these by means of a Commission of Supervisors, Messrs. Vansittart, Scrafton, and Forde. These were all

[1] The best-known writings of the day on India were those of Messrs. Bolts and Dow. Hastings's opinion of them is given in letters to his friend Mr. Sulivan: 'It affords me no inconsiderable concern to observe that the people of England and even our Honourable Masters, who should form their opinions with more candour, are thus easily induced to credit every calumny put forth by each paltry scribbler of the day. The productions of Messrs. Bolts and Dowe are medlies replete (though not in an equal degree) with abominable untruths, base aspersions and absurdities. How cruel to judge the reputation of anyone by such criterions! . . . I detest both Bolts' performance and Dowe's. The former is such a medley of nonsense as well as falsehood, and must disgust any unpassionate reader.' [He adds that Dow's, while partly true, is wanting in the subjects of revenue, justice, &c., and hopes that the Court of Directors do not form their judgement of the conduct and character of their servants from such evidence.] *Vide* British Museum Add. MS. 29127.

[2] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. iv, Appendix 65, p. 535.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Bengal servants of standing and experience. They were dispatched from England in November 1769, and lost at sea, whereby a year was wasted, and it was not till the spring of 1771 that the Directors determined to supply their place by appointing one man, Warren Hastings. Hastings had been Vansittart's main and often sole supporter, both in Bengal and at the bar of the House of Commons, and the choice of him to carry out the work which had been designed for his leader was thus a natural one. His appointment was made in a dispatch from the Court of Directors to the President and Council of Bengal, dated April 10, 1771, and received on February 2, 1772; he reached Calcutta from Madras by February 17 of that year.[1] The President, Cartier, had failed to carry out the Directors' orders to institute inquiries and recover moneys from certain of their servants: while admitting his abilities and previous good conduct,[2] they expressed their displeasure and commanded his resignation, but he was to retain control until the season's ships were dispatched. He took his leave on April 13, 1772, but did not quit India until January 1773. Hastings assumed the government on April 9, 1772.

Hastings spent the two months of waiting in studying the situation and the instructions to the three Commissioners, which he found awaiting his attention.

[1] Gleig, vol. i, p. 198; *Bengal Letters received*, No. 10; *Bengal Civil List*, vol. ii, April 1773.

[2] Cartier had joined the service and travelled to India at the same time as Hastings, and worked in the same office from 1749 to 1753.

A fuller analysis of Cartier's character is given in an anonymous *Short Review of the British Empire in India*, written in 1790 (British Museum Add. MS. 29209, No. 9, p. 195): 'In the discussion that took place in Parliament in 1773, upon Indian affairs, it was the fashion to impute the embarrassments of the Company at that period to the misconduct of the Government of Bengal, and it was the interest of the Minister and Clive to encourage such an idea—but the fact was otherwise; Mr. Verelst, who succeeded Clive, was as honest and as worthy a man as ever lived. He quitted the Government a poorer man than he entered it. So did his successor, who was known throughout his life in India by the name of the virtuous Mr. Cartier, and has been for eighteen years a respectable plain English country gentlemen, with an income of £2,000 a year, in the Woulds of Kent, and distinguished by the title of the Man of Kent by all his neighbours. These two Governours were actually tied down by Clive and the Directors to the observance of the absurd system which Clive had established. Mr. Hastings was the first man authorized to abolish it.'

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

In reviewing their affairs three main objects had engaged the Company's efforts:

1. The adjustment of the relation of Bengal to the neighbouring 'country' powers.

2. The correction of internal abuses.

3. The raising of funds, (*a*) by revenue, (*b*) by commerce.

To appreciate the force of their orders with regard to the first, the political situation of India as it affected the British must be understood. The effete empire of the Moguls was in the hands of independent princes, who still—like the Company—pretended for the most part a titular obedience to it, but the greatest power in native India was really that of the Marathas. This was a loose confederation of predatory states, having their base in the hill-country of central India, north of the Narbada River, whence they terrorized the plains and extorted a tribute, called 'chout', from all and sundry. Their nominal head was the Peshwa or minister of a Raja *fainéant*, the descendant of Sivaji, at Poona, whose position threatened Bombay. He had supports to the north-east and east, in the excessively mobile arms of Holkar, Chief of Malwa, and the more established rule of the Nizam of Hyderabad, a neighbour dangerous to Madras. The most powerful leader of them all was, however, Sindhia of Gwalior, whose impregnable strongholds threatened Delhi and the fertile Doab valley to the south of it; while still farther to the south-east the ring was closed by the Bhonsla of Nagpur, who claimed chout along the borders of Bengal and over half Orissa. Had this loose mass been capable of crystallizing into a solid and progressive state, the English might have left India to work out her own salvation under its leading, but it was essentially a dynamic and disruptive force, living by warfare and organized plunder, and constantly itself racked by the discords of its rival chiefs. Yet it was a great and growing military power, as Clive had recognized. He had advised the Directors to make terms with it, paying chout in return for a formal cession of Orissa, which province, while it was included in the Emperor's grant of the Diwani, was so drained by raids that it had yielded little beyond the revenue of the easternmost portion, Midnapore. To this



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

suggestion the Company turned a deaf ear; Clive then concluded the Treaty of Allahabad, acknowledging the Emperor but relying for the defence of Bengal against the Marathas upon his nominal Vizier, Shuja-ud-Daula, ruler of Oudh. This district stretched from the borders of the Mogul's lands to Bihar, and its most important districts were the southern provinces of Kora and Allahabad, lying along the Ganges highway. As the main way of approach to Bengal from the interior, it was of vital strategical importance. Whoever held it in force could, if hostile to Bengal, stifle her commerce and pour their forces down upon her plains. It stood to Bengal as the Rhine valley stands to the Low Countries, a shield in friendly hands, but in those of an enemy the gateway of doom. By Clive's arrangement the once hostile Vizier was reconciled and reinstated in Oudh as the ally and outpost of Bengal; but the clause which forced him to make over to the Emperor the revenues of his best provinces, Kora and Allahabad, crippled his power and weakened his adhesion. The Emperor too was no sooner returned to Delhi than he found himself a virtual prisoner in Sindhia's hands, and was forced to convert to the marauders' use whatever political and financial credit he could still muster, not excluding the Oudh revenues so lately acquired. These were serious flaws in the main stuff of Clive's treaty, turning his weapons against himself. Such was the actual state of affairs when the Company's Instructions to their three Commissioners came to be inherited by Hastings as Governor. The policy they laid down for the future was one of non-intervention. The Emperor was to retain the revenues of Kora and Allahabad and to receive his portion of the Diwani revenues, but not to be abetted in any new enterprise; for the Company saw that each step must lead to a fresh advance, and conquest was no part of their ambition. This is very emphatically stated in the Instructions to the Commissioners (p. 127), and as concerned Bengal Hastings succeeded skilfully in obeying them: though the other Presidencies were later to embroil him in war.

To attain their second object, the removal of internal abuses, the Directors proposed three courses.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

The first was an inquiry into the methods and machinery of justice, and to this end the first suggestion in the Instructions of 1769 was to set up a Resident and Council in each province, Murshidabad for Bengal and Patna for Bihar. Six months later, however, a rearrangement of the service was proposed. The Council, to consist henceforth of nine members, were to be fixed at Calcutta, and allowed to take no other post, so that they might devote their energies to inspecting the revenue accounts, hearing complaints and redressing grievances 'in case of maladministration of justice, extortion or oppression of any kind . . . which they only can do as there are no other Justices of the Peace in that Country'. This statement shows a confusion to exist in the minds of the Directors. It implied that the native Courts of Justice were under the superintendence of the English Company: but until they should assume their proper responsibilities by 'starting forth as Dewan' and throwing off the mask of the Nizamut, that was not the case. In 1770 they had not done so. The truth was, that the Directors did not know what, if any, native Courts of Justice existed, and were far from appreciating the distinction between the civil powers of a Diwan and the criminal jurisdiction of the Nizam and his Faujdars. Nevertheless they were on the right road. To confine their Calcutta Government to governing was an essential reform now that they were the rulers of Bengal, and the first step which clearly differentiated the territorial power of the Company from its old commercial character. The work of merchants and the supervision of the local collections were both in future to be left to the lower ranks of the Service. The Councillors were to have fixed salaries and might carry on private trade in free competition with all comers, whether native or European.

For to secure their third aim of an improved financial position the Company in all their dispatches insisted that the inland trade was to be 'free, equal and open to all without distinction, subject to all duties which may be levied on behalf of the Company'. It was hoped that the duties on inland and private trade would amount to £120,000 per annum (p. 130). As they abolished English monopolies, so also they commanded

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

inquiry to be made into that part of the revenue which formed the Nawab's stipend, to ensure that no monopolies should linger on under his aegis, and that the money paid out to him should not be frittered away unnecessarily. Still further to ensure a full and free flow of the wealth of Bengal into their treasury, and the due payment of those high dividends which London awaited with so much eagerness, economy was strictly enjoined on the civil and military establishments, and especially in army contracts, which had waxed inordinately: an unauthorized donation made by the Council under Spencer's régime to certain civil and military servants out of a surplus revenue fund was to be recovered: and all who had been guilty of practising the forbidden inland trade monopolies were to be prosecuted and made to disgorge, not for the benefit of the poor native competitor but for that of the offended Company!

Such were the orders which the Commissioners had been meant to execute, and they had been made known to the Calcutta Government before Hastings's arrival. The responsibility for their execution devolved on him, and for twelve months after his arrival a further series of dispatches continued to arrive, heaping indignation on his predecessors and proposing fresh reforms. The effect of these additional orders was to increase the number of inquiries committed to Hastings's charge, but at the same time to give a vital impulse to his powers by the actual assumption of the Diwani Government. It is evident that as soon as the Directors looked into the working of their previous orders for reform they must have realized that these could only be put through by the exercise of the Diwani authority, and that they must themselves direct the Nizamut, since they had deprived it of independent force. By the dispatch of April 10, 1771, in which they had ordered the removal of superfluous custom-houses, they had already intervened in the administration of public affairs. In 1771 they were looking for good results from the newly installed supervisors, whose activities would, it was thought, make Mohamed Reza Khan's connexion with the revenues a sinecure. But the reports of the supervisors when they

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

came to hand showed this experiment to be a failure. It was then a very short step, though one of epoch-making importance, to assume the Government and remove Mohamed Reza Khan, and this step the Directors took in their dispatch of August 28, 1771. The mismanagement or peculation in the Nizamut, the drought and famine of 1770, were producing disastrous results throughout the country, which began to be apparent even to those at home in the disappointing revenue and the reduced investment. It was necessary to admit that Clive's Dual System had broken down: neither the officers of the Nizamut, who lacked the power, nor the English servants, who disowned responsibility, could or would keep order in the land. Two things needed doing: a power at once sufficient and responsible must be established; and those individuals, whether native or English, who had abused their power must be made to answer for it. In Hastings the Directors felt that they had an efficient chief in whose person they might safely take the bold step, and upon him these two tasks were laid: by what new system they were to be accomplished it was largely left to him to decide.[1] Of the two, the inquiry into the conduct of offenders was, in the opinion of the Directors, the first in importance. Here Hastings privately differed from his employers:[2] he fully recognized the abuses, but he already perceived that the blame for them attached by right to the impossible system and not to the men, who in many cases had done their utmost to make it work.[3]

He foresaw that the opposition and delay to which these inquiries must give rise would seriously hamper, if they did not entirely prevent, the far more important work of laying

[1] By the year 1771 it had become evident that the three Commissioners were lost at sea, and Hastings's appointment was consequently made. The dispatch of December 18, 1771, was the first addressed to him as President, and was accompanied by a private letter directing him to prosecute guilty colleagues.

[2] Gleig, vol. i, p. 216; *House of Commons Reports*, vol. iv, p. 307.

[3] Gleig, vol. i, p. 368. Hastings was prepared to trust natives with office as well as English (*vide* p. 156, Proposed Regulations, 6). In this respect his understanding of the native character seems to have been in advance of his age; our own has proved how well confidence in Indian ability and devotion to the British Raj is warranted.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

down new lines of administration. He expressed his views to his friend Dupré at Madras: 'I shall be sorry to begin my new office with retrospections. These measures are arming my hand against every man, and every man's of course against me.'[1] His private correspondence during the spring and summer of 1772 is even more valuable than his official reports for the insight it affords into the mind and aims of the reformer (pp. 146–151).

He gives in a letter to Purling his impressions of the changes in Bengal since he quitted it in 1764: 'The portrait of Bengal falls short of the life. Will you believe that the boys of the service are the sovereigns of the country under the unmeaning title of supervisors, collectors of the revenue, administrators of justice and rulers, heavy rulers of the people? They are said to be under the control of the Boards of Revenue at Moorshedabad and Patna, who are lords of those capitals and of the districts annexed to them, and dispose of the first offices of the state. Subject (as it is said also) to the Governor and Council, who, you may take my word for it, if the conclusion be not self-evident, have neither honour nor emolument, but are honoured only with responsibility. This is the system which my predecessor, Cartier, was turned out for exposing, and I will be turned out too rather than suffer it to continue as it is.'

Here again Hastings makes a clear-cut distinction between the system and the men operating it. While condemning the tyranny of the supervisors unreservedly, as well as that of the members of the new Revenue Boards, he traces the source of the evil to their inevitable rivalry with the Council. Supposed both in India and England to be the supreme controlling body, it was in fact, since the institution of supervisors, the least coveted and least regarded position in the Company's service, holding out little attraction and much toilsome business to its members. Many of these indeed were absentees, holding lucrative Chiefships up-country; the business was either neglected or hurried through by the unfortunates detained in Calcutta (pp. 146, 155, letter to Purling and

[1] Gleig, vol. i, p. 264.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Proposed Regulations, 4), and the decisions, where they conflicted with private interests, could be challenged or circumvented through the kind offices of the independent Boards of Revenue. Hastings's letters to individual Directors glow with indignation at the confusion and corruption that resulted, and while he marked time, waiting for Cartier's departure, he planned the work to be done under seven heads :

1. To implant the authority of the Company and the sovereignty of Great Britain in the constitution.
2. To abolish all secret influence and make Government itself responsible.
3. To remove independent despotism by being open to complaints.
4. To relieve the ryots from oppressive taxes.
5. To introduce a regular system of justice and protection.
6. To relieve the distresses of the Company at home by :
   (*a*) Uniform collections of the revenue;
   (*b*) Savings in the expenses of the Government;
   (*c*) Foreign acquisitions of wealth.
7. To extend the political influence of the Company without enlarging its territory.

Several of these points invite comment. The claim of the Crown to sovereign rights over their territories was one the Company were naturally loath to admit without reserve : Hastings appears to take it for granted. His next aim, to abolish secret influence, meant nothing less than a frank casting aside of the mask Clive had imposed, and a full assumption of the Company's responsibility. To remove independent despotism, relieve the ryot and afford him justice, would be the natural outcome of such a step, though to complete these reforms many measures would be required. The most direct would have been to remove the supervisors from their districts, as Henry II removed the independent sheriffs from English shires. But Hastings was not a king, and the patronage and influence of Directors and ' King's friends ' made such a clean sweep as yet a counsel of perfection. Hastings could only attain to it by a long course of tenacious persistence.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

The final clause deals with foreign relations, and here we find Hastings yields only a partial assent to the policy of non-intervention. He shows no more wish than his masters to extend their territory, but for its very preservation he is determined to extend their influence. He recognized more clearly than they what a danger threatened Bengal and the whole of India in the aggressive militarism of the Maratha states, and that Bengal could only be safe if, by a firm system of alliances, she lent British support to her strongest neighbours and formed of them a barrier.

With these aims as his goal Hastings held on a consistent course through his long administration, giving place now and again before overwhelming opposition, only to return at the first opportunity to the resumption of his programme. The best summary of the measures by which he sought to initiate the work is to be found in the Regulations proposed for the Government of Bengal (p. 153). The manuscript in which they survive is undated, and they are little known because they formed only the rough draft of ideas later embodied in the Regulations for the Settlement of Revenues issued by the Calcutta Committee of Revenue on May 14, 1772,[1] and the Plan of Justice issued by the Committee of Circuit and generally known as the Plan of 1772.[2]

These Proposed Regulations never became law in their original shape, but they are none the less important. They show the Government of Bengal as Hastings would have had it, and a comparison of this scheme of his with the actual Regulations so soon after enforced gives the measure of deflexion from his direct path which was imposed upon him by the views of others. It is worthy of remark that while the merely retrospective and inquisitorial features of the Directors' orders are here ignored, the scheme embodies all those commands which had a constructive value for the new State, and is essentially based on the new principle asserted in August 1771, of 'starting forth as Dewan'.

[1] *I. O. Records*, Range 67, vol. liv, p. 251.
[2] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. iv, p. 301.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

In the most important Regulations I and IV, Hastings embodies the Company's resolve to confine the Council to its administrative work, and his notes upon them follow closely the reasoning of the Directors' Letter to the three Commissioners of March 23, 1770. The numbers of the Council are not specified.[1] A firm control of the executive in every part would be secured to the Governor by the second Regulation, which made him *ex officio* president of every committee and also Commander-in-Chief. The principle of civil control was still further safeguarded by the third article, afterwards erased, where military officers were prohibited attendance at the Council Board. In the disputes which had occurred between Cartier's Council and the officers, and the conduct of General Barker in 1772, with regard to Captain Harper and the Burrampore court martial, the motive for such clauses may be traced. There is no doubt that Hastings embodied in them his conviction that indisputable supremacy should rest in the hands of the civil authority, but in suppressing clause 3 he showed his prudence. It would no doubt prove apt to provoke the jealousy of his military colleagues and even that of the Directors, who, while they constantly assured him of support in his reforms, were yet extremely susceptible to any independence of their authority.[2]

No clause shows more clearly than No. 5 that Hastings outran his employers in grasp of the true economic values of

[1] In an erased part of the first Regulation and a note to the fourth the numbers of the Council are given as twelve, which had been the usual numbers for some years before 1770. In March 1770 the Company had, however, confined the number to nine. On the other hand, on the occasion of Hastings's appointment, fourteen Councillors were named (April 10, 1771), and it was not clear whether this was meant as rule or exception. Either number was sufficiently large to prevent partisan feeling forming such a deadlock as occurred after the Regulating Act had reduced the numbers to four. This was a danger which Hastings foresaw. His experience of Committees led him to prefer an executive of one, but to consider a large body safer than a small one. He wrote on November 11, 1772: 'A principle of decision must rest somewhere. In a body of men entrusted with it, its efficacy is lost by being too much divided. It is liable to still worse consequences the less the number is of which the body consists, because the majority is easier formed. Fixed to a single point only it can command confidence and ensure consistency' (Gleig, vol. i, p. 371).

[2] These clauses, 2 and 3, should be compared with Hastings's suggestions to the Court of Directors, made in the General Letter of November 11, 1773.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

their territory as contrasted with narrower, commercial interests. The fact that 'the Investment is now but a secondary object of the Company's attention' is the key-note to the whole situation since 1765, and it was a fact that the shareholders failed to seize: the more enlightened of the Directors had but just appreciated it. It is impossible to read their dispatches without noticing that their interest quickens whenever they turn from somewhat vague directions for the benefit of the Hindu to the subject of their own proper sphere, commerce. In Warren Hastings's replies the tendency is all the other way. From a perfunctory attention to the requirements of the treasury, he turns with a real and lively devotion to the broad social and economic problems presented by his subjects, whether ryots or Zemindars; probably of all these Regulations the one nearest his heart was No. 6, which committed the collections to the hands of native agents as of old. Shame and indignation over the past misdeeds of their English masters show between the lines of his closing plea for 'the people whom as our subjects we are bound to protect'. He follows it up in clauses 7 and 8, by the most telling blows at the old state of things. With the exception of a Resident and his Writer at each aurung, all Europeans are to be confined to Calcutta, where the Mayor's Court can enforce their obedience to British laws. The rest of the country is to be put once more under the traditional authority of the Hindu and Mahomedan judicial systems, until by gradual contact Western ideas shall have proved their claims to superiority and won acceptance. Hastings had a high idea of the efficacy of the native systems when properly enforced, and he speaks eloquently of the unfairness of subjecting the natives to laws utterly foreign to their understanding or habits. On the other hand, he is resolute that no native shall escape the penalties imposed by his own laws through pleading the protection of an English employer. In the country the native magistrate should be supreme over every inhabitant, with the sole exception of the two covenanted servants at each aurung or factory. Even this exception afforded a loophole for the old abuses, as Hastings saw, but with all other Euro-

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

peans withdrawn, it would be easy to identify an offending servant, and a strong central authority was being called into existence at Calcutta, fully competent to punish them. The suggestion of an *iter* of Councillors, embodied in Regulation 11, was no doubt meant as an added safeguard. It took practical form in the one great *iter* of the Committee of Circuit, created to deal with the Settlement of the Lands, the revenue assessment, and the due organizing of the Courts of Justice. The principles laid down for its procedure by the Board of Revenue at Calcutta on May 14, 1772,[1] and the Plan of Justice issued by the Committee of Circuit itself on August 15, from Murshidabad,[2] are the logical development of these clauses of Hastings's Proposed Regulations, and taken together, may be said to form the Magna Carta of the native subjects. Experiments though they were, the lines are laid down in them upon which British administrators have since proceeded, and in many particulars by an unbroken succession. The precision and insight which characterize these Regulations help to explain the amazing volume of the work which Hastings was able to accomplish in the two short years 1772 and 1773, before his powers were crippled by the arrival of the new Councillors appointed under the Regulating Act. The directions from home had indeed indicated the chief objects of reform, but suggested no method of attaining them, and the tangle of abuses was left to Hastings to unravel and set in order. As he wrote to his able Councillor, Barwell,[3] 'The new government consists of a confused heap of undigested materials as wild as the Chaos itself: the Collection of the Revenue, the provision of the Investment, the administration of Justice (if it exists at all), the care of the Police are all huddled together—we have them all to separate and bring into order at once. We must work as an arithmetician does, with his Rule of False, adopt a plan upon conjecture, try, execute, add and deduct from it till it is brought into a perfect shape.' But to work thus, by means of experiments, was the very way

[1] *I. O. Records*, Range 67, vol. liv, p. 251.
[2] *I. O. Records: Comm. of Circuit*, vol. i, p. 181.
[3] Gleig, vol. i, p. 316.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

of all others most apt to lay Hastings open to blame for all failures, while his successors would be the men to reap the praise for his slowly ripening successes: as he said himself, 'If we escape censure, we have little ground to hope for applause'. Yet in the first dispatch which the Directors addressed to the President and Council in reply to news of the reforms, that namely of April 16, 1773,[1] they did applaud and commend him for judgement and prudence, and 'a constant and steady endeavour to effectuate every good purpose ... for the advancement of the Company's interest and welfare', and promised their firmest protection for any such further measures. How far that protection was extended to Hastings on his return after thirteen devoted years history relates.

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER V

The documents illustrative of this chapter fall under two main heads:—

I. The Directors' expressions of dissatisfaction with the condition of Bengal under the Dual System, and their schemes of reform.

II. Hastings's opinions on the same subject; his plans for reform and his 'Proposed Regulations'.

N.B.—The Directors' views are to be found in papers addressed to the three Commissioners dispatched in 1769, and in further dispatches to the President and Council. Of these the following are the most important for any student of the period. Certain of them have been published in Gleig's *Memoirs of W. Hastings* or in scattered fragments in the Reports of the Parliamentary Committees. I have endeavoured in my illustrations to supplement these with such unpublished materials as in themselves give a complete presentation of the situation.

### I. List of the most important Dispatches sent in the Years 1769 to 1773 by the Court of Directors to the President and Council of Bengal.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *Sept. 15, 1769 | . | Instructions to Commissioners. |
| * ,, ,, ,, | . | Letter ,, President and Council. |
| *March 23, 1770 | . | ,, ,, Commissioners. |

[1] *I. O. Records: Bengal Dispatches*, vol. vi, p. 515.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *March | 23, 1770 | Letter to President and Council. |
| *June | 27 ,, | ,, ,, ,, ,, ,, |
| *April | 10, 1771 | ,, ,, ,, ,, ,, |
| ,, | 25 ,, | ,, ,, ,, ,, ,, |
| Aug. | 28 ,, | ,, ,, ,, ,, ,, |
| Dec. | 18 ,, | ,, ,, ,, ,, ,, |
| ,, | ,, ,, | Private Letter to W. Hastings. |
| March | 25, 1772 | Letter to President and Council. |
| Nov. | 24 ,, | ,, ,, ,, ,, ,, |
| Dec. | 11 ,, | ,, ,, ,, ,, ,, |
| April | 7, 1773 | ,, ,, ,, ,, ,, |
| ,, | 16, 1773[1] | ,, ,, ,, ,, ,, |

## No. 1. *Instructions to Commissioners.*

[The following is Hastings's summary of the Instructions, supplemented where it seemed advisable from the Home Series of *I. O. Records* by portions of the full text of the original Instructions or by a summary of clauses omitted by Hastings. All such additions are distinguished by round brackets.]

British Museum Add. MS. 29130.

Dated London, September 15, 1769, and received in Calcutta per E. I. Company's ship *Lord Holland* in December 1771.

Objects to be sought by the Commissioners:—

1. 'The Company's prosperity and perfect harmony between yourselves . . . the restoring of Peace in India upon a solid and permanent Basis providing for the honor and security of our . . . ally Mohamed Ally Cawn, Nabob of Arcot.

2. Views of the Company confined to the preservation of the revenues of Bengal and their present possessions.

(2. 'The Dewanni of Bengal, Bahar and Orissa with the Possessions we hold in those Provinces are the utmost Limits of our Views on that side of India. On the Coast the protection of the Carnatic, the Sircars, And on the Bombay side its dependencies, Salsette, Bassein, Surat. The protection of these is easily within the reach of our Power, and may mutually support each other without any Country Alliance whatever.

[1] This is the first reply to reports from W. Hastings. Of these documents Nos. 1 to 3 are to be found in the *I. O. Records: Home Series*, vol. 204; the rest in *Bengal Dispatches*, vols. v and vi.

Abstracts in W. Hastings's handwriting of those marked * are in the British Museum Add. MS. 29130.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

If we pass these bounds we shall be led on from one acquisition to another till we shall find no Security but in the Subjection of the Whole, which by dividing your hous (*sic*), might lose us the Whole, and end in our Extirpation from Indostan.')

3. No treaties with the Country powers to engage the Company either immediately or eventually in their disputes.

(4. If war is inevitable the preservation and security of Bengal is of all others the most important object.)

(5. Northern Circars—not the wish of the Company to keep armies there but farm them out.)

6. Allahabad and Corah to be preserved to the King or an equivalent given him to his satisfaction.

7. Not to embark in any expedition on his account at the hazard of our troops and possessions.

(8. Salsette and Bassein title to be procured if possible by treaty with the Marattas.)

(9 and 10. Blank Phirmaund for the Deccan to be returned to the King, etc.)

(11, 12. Replacing Military or Civil Servants to be cautiously done and to be by seniority usually.)

13, 15 and 16. A speedy and strict inquiry into the administration of Justice enjoined, and into the nature and constitution of the Zemindary and Cutchery Courts, to be reformed and altered if necessary.

(14. The five per cent. tax on justice. In particular we direct that the practice of withholding or taking five per cent. upon the recovery of Debts, in any Court of Justice whatever for the use of the Company, or on any other pretence, be totally abolished.)

(15. We much wish to obtain security for the properties and persons of the Natives; and to that end, we desire you will make full enquiry into the nature and constitution of the Courts of Zemindary and Cutchery, or other Courts wherever our Possessions or Revenues extend, and that you will endeavour to reform all such abuses as shall have found their way into them, to the oppression of the Natives; and we desire you will use them for rendering their Properties less precarious, and their Possessions more permanent.)

(16. In case the constitutions of the above-mentioned Courts shall be found defective, we desire you will use your best endeavours to obtain all proper and necessary reformations and alterations therein; or if you shall judge it expedient, you are to procure Phirmaunds from the King, or the Country Powers, for erecting and establishing new Courts of Judicature, respecting both Civil and Criminal Jurisdiction.)

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

17. An enquiry to be made into the application of the Nabob's revenues and restitution and satisfaction ordered to be made where necessary.

18. The immense salaries and allowances to Mohamed Reza Cawn another subject of consideration.

(19. The exorbitant interest which the Tenants and Landholders are compelled to pay for small sums, necessarily borrowed by them, in order to enable them to pay their rents, appears to us to be a well-founded and grievous complaint, and we desire you will pay great regard towards obtaining a remedy for it, which we apprehend may in a great measure be done, by altering and regulating the periods of payment of the rents and revenues, if that measure shall be thought by you expedient.)

20. No man's estate to be confiscated or seized after his death as in the Moorish times.

21 and 22. Trade to be left free and unrestrained.

(23. Silk to be procured for the Investment, 'a great national object', 'that we may be able not only to vie with but to obtain a preference of the foreign imported silk'.)

(24. Silk in Rungpore and Ophium to be acquired [for the trade to Balambangan in Java].)

(25. The scarcity of silver, whether due to export or 'from the fatal consequences of the Gold Coinage'.)

26. An enquiry into monopolies to be set on foot, particularly in the article of cotton, because there was information against Mohamed Reza Cawn on that head.

27. Recommends an enquiry into trade of Salt, &c., with orders to dismiss from the service every one concerned in it in a manner contrary to repeated orders.

(. . . It excites our utmost Indignation to find, that great fortunes have been acquired by persons in our Service, in Trades carried on in direct opposition to our express injunctions and commands; and as we cannot too severely punish such contumacious practices, we desire you will endeavour to discover the principal actors and abettors in these acts of disobedience, and upon due proof, that you will not only dismiss them from our service, but that you will take all legal measures to obtain satisfaction to the Company in the Courts of Justice in India, and in cases where the evidence may not be found sufficient or effectual to procure redress and satisfaction, by the strict rules of law there, that you will transmit to us the fullest and most explicit proofs of the facts, which you are capable of obtaining.)

28. An enquiry to be made into the enormous expence of the military establishment and into contracts for supplies.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

29. For the better management of the revenues it is recommended as a *prudent* measure that 'There should be a Resident with a Council or proper assistants at the Chief places of Collection, who should have power to conduct and regulate the mode and charges of Collection and reform all abuses therein and to whom the complaints of the Inhabitants may at all times find free access'.

N.B.—This paragraph does not appear to agree with paragraph 79 of the Letter to Commissioners of date March 23 following, where the principal reason assigned for the residence of the Council at Calcutta is, that they may be able to apply to this very business, here supposed to rest with the Councils on the spot? Does not the last supersede the former regulation?[1]

30. No trade to be permitted to any servant employed in the Collection of the revenue.

[31 to 34 relate to the Country Powers, Carnatic, &c.]

[35 relates to negligence in book-keeping.]

[36 orders surveys and maps to be made.]

[37 to 47 deal with the authority, duration, &c., of the Commission.]

No. 2. *Letter to the Commissioners, dated March* 23, 1770.

[This document is compiled like the preceding one from the two sources, (1) Hastings's Abstract, British Museum Add. MS. 29130, and (2) *I. O. Records, Home Series*, vol. 204, p. 36.]

[Paragraphs 1 to 68, Carnatic affairs.]

[69, 70. Deputation to Suja u Dowla, presents given excessive and costly.]

[71 to 78. Scrutiny ordered into various particulars.]

79. Trade in Betelnut and Tobacco to be laid open to all persons, European as well as Native, and expected to be so regulated as to yield a duty of £120,000 p.a.

(79 and 80. [Trade to be free]... 'for these and other special considerations (we) have resolved and do hereby appoint that the Governor and Council do always remain at Calcutta, subject to exceptions hereafter mentioned'.)

(81. That with the Governor and exclusive of the Military Commander the Council is to consist of 9 Members and no more.)

[82. Excepts General Coote.]

(83. 'We further direct that such Members of Council who are at present Chiefs of Patna, Cossimbazar, Dacca or Chittagong, and likewise the Resident at the Durbar,[2] be recalled and

[1] This note is by W. Hastings. [2] i. e. at Murshidabad.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

that in future no Member of the said Council be permitted to act as Chief of any of the above Factories subordinate to the Presidency of Bengal, but if you shall be of opinion that it will be for the interest of the Company that one of the Council should reside at the Durbar, we give you power to order it, but in that case we direct that such Councillor be always the next in succession to the Governor.')

(84. 'And that neither of the Officers of Export and Investment, Warehouse-Keeper, &c. . . . or any other office or place in the Company's service, &c. . . . shall in future be annexed to the station of a Member of the Council at the said Presidency; who occupying no posts whatever, are to form themselves into Committees, agreeably to the plan hereafter mentioned.' . . .)

85. [Refers to the foregoing which excludes the Council from all employments and says] 'By these regulations the Governor and Council will be enabled with more attention to *inspect* into the management of the revenues, to *hear* the complaints of the inhabitants and to *redress* grievances in the case of maladministration of justice, extortions or oppressions of any kind.

86. Our said Governor and Council being thus *indispensably* appointed to *control* and *order* every branch of the service, the forming themselves into Committees will be more convenient.'

(86. 'Our said Governor and Council being thus indispensably appointed to control and order every branch of the service either as a Board or by forming themselves into Committees as hereafter directed for that purpose will be more at leisure to attend to the Police and Good Government of the Settlement and the Provinces, to the hearing and deciding of complaints, which they only can do as there are no other justices of the Peace in that Country, and to the more speedy determination of appeals which come before them as well from the Mayor's Court under the Charter as from the Court of Cutcherry which determines Civil Disputes between the Natives without the Charter.')

(87. The offices within the Settlement, as Warehouse-Keeper &c. as well as the Boards of Revenues and Chiefships of the Subordinate Factories, must all be held and managed by the Senior Servants of the Company under the Council with the Salaries hereafter mentioned, but such perquisites, (if any) are to be abolished which oppress the Natives, or materially affect the interest of the Company.)

(88. [A good effect likely to result,] for when reports are brought to a Board by Members themselves belonging to that Board . . . the inspection is less vigorous, than when they sit



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

altogether as a Board of Control, having no concern themselves in the Offices to which such reports relate. . . .)

(89. 'It may be objected that this plan will deprive the Council of the advantages of trade which they enjoy by their stations at the Subordinate Factories and Residencies in the Country. If it is true, that the Chiefs of particular Districts have kept the whole trade to themselves, it is a monopoly which has our disapprobation and must be at all events entirely abolished, and we apprehend this will be most effectually done by making it the interest of the Council not to suffer such undue practices, and the Council, though resident in Calcutta, are to pursue and to maintain their right to trade in every part of the Country, so as not to interfere with our Investment, and we empower them to prevent the Out-Factories from interrupting the trade in any manner under the severest penalties.')

90. A new allowance of 1,500*r.* p.a. to each Councillor will with their Salary, Diet and Allowances and the share in the Commission on the revenues now increased to 2½, with the advantages of trade altogether *compensate* for their Diminution of emolument from the new regulation.

[90. Emoluments to be for the Council 1,500*r.* p.a. each with salary, diet allowances, and two shares in the 2½ Commission on the revenues, with commerce in all the country and] (' their trade from port to port in India.')

[91. Servants below the Council to take charge of the Subordinates.]

[92. With the usual emoluments, except perquisites injurious to the country.]

[93. These being under the Council all occasion for parade is abolished.]

94. The four Chiefs at the Durbar, Cossimbazar, Dacca and Patna to be allowed salaries of 2,000*r.* each p.a. and no more.

95, 96 settle the manner of forming the Committees of the Council. The Committee of Revenue is to consist of Four. To this belongs *examination* of the books and accounts of all the Collections, including Burdwan &c. They are to *remark* excesses and savings, *point* out neglect, misconduct or merit, to *see* that we neither abuse or are abused by the Renters, to *form* regulations for the improvement of the revenues, and all grievances and oppressions arising in any shape from this branch or from any concerned in it to be heard and redressed in this Committee. Notice of this last regulation to be given in the public bazaar once in the year by beat of drum.

[96. List of the Committees to be created :—

A Committee of Treasury as before.

A Committee of Revenue; ' under this department there will be : the Collectors of Revenue at the Durbar, Burdwan, Midnapore, Chittagong and the Calcutta Pergunnahs, the Collectors General and the Custom Master.'

A Committee of Commerce of four members (' under their jurisdiction will be all the Subordinates except what concerns also the Warehouse-Keepers; it must be their province to inspect that every Chiefship procures the Investment assigned . . . that the private trade in Salt, Betel and Tobacco be free equal and open to all without distinction, subject to all duties which may be levied on behalf of the Company . . . and that they encourage the vegetation of saltpetre and the poppy.' ' Connected with this Board are :—The Subordinates, the Export Warehouse Keeper, the Import Warehouse Keeper. And by this Committee all grievances and complaints of the Natives and others regarding trade, shall be considered and redressed, and to be published and posted up in the same manner as is directed to be done in respect to the Committee of Revenue.')

A Military Committee.

A Committee of Accounts; under this come the Accountant, the Buxey, the Mint and Assay Masters.]

No. 3. *Hastings's abstract of the Directors' Letter of March* 23, 1770, *to the President and Council.*

British Museum Add. MS. 29130, p. 9.

[The only important paragraphs are 54, which prescribes the freedom of trade in Salt, Betel and Tobacco, and the two given below.]

179. Council to consist only of Nine—The Council all to reside at Calcutta, except the Resident at the Durbar and the General—no member of Council to have any employ—but the Offices to be held by the next in Rank—The Council to be formed into Committees.

180. The Governour—the Commander-in-Chief—and three Senior Councillors to be a Select Committee—Powers of the said Committee—to make regulations respecting Peace and War and negotiate with the Country Powers, but not finally to conclude any Treaty, until the Terms and Conditions of such Treaty shall have been first approved by our Governour and Council—The Governour singly shall correspond with the Country Powers; but all letters before they shall be by him sent, must be by him communicated to the other Members of

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

the Select Committee and receive their Approbation and also all Letters whatever which may be received by the Governour in answer to or in the course of his Correspondence shall likewise be laid before the Select Committee for their Information and Consideration, and all proceedings and Correspondence must be regularly entered on their Consultations, and sent home in Duplicate.

[The letter of June 27, 1770, is comparatively unimportant.]

No. 4. *Hastings's Abstract of the Letter of April* 10, 1771.

British Museum Add. MS. 29130, p. 12.

Para. 25. Dysticks to be abolished.

27. No Petty Chokeys to be allowed.

28. The nine General Chokeys for the Circars to be continued, and a person to reside at each on the part of the Nabob with Company's servants as Duans.

30. Other European nations to pay at the general Chokees as usual and nothing more.

34. Orders to revoke the Prohibition of Trade with Suja Dowla's Country.

64. 'It is with pleasure we observe that the Appointment of Supravisors to *examine* into the State of the provinces (under the Instructions which our late President has with so much Judgement and Fulness laid down for their Guidance) may be productive of so general a Reformation of the Abuses which are the immediate Objects of our concern . . . we wait with Impatience for the Issue of the *Supravisors' researches* in full Hope that our President and Council will have adopted such Measures as shall unite our Views not only for the Company's interests but for the good of a Country from which we receive so great Advantages.'

66, 67. Ballances due by Mohamed Reza Cawn as Renter of the Chuckla of Dacca to be enquired into . . .

[Other clauses unimportant.]

[This letter being the most important, a summary of its subject-matter is appended.]

1 to 8. Shipping details.

9 to 21. Investment, &c.

22 to 31. Government, Justice, Free trade, Dustucks, and Chokeys.

32. Compensation by certificates to servants.

33 to 35. External trade with Oude, &c.

36 to 51. Reductions required in salaries, Mohamed Reza Cawn, &c.

52 to 55. The French, Jaghirdars, &c.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

56 to 62. Fortifications and military affairs.

63. Coinage.

64 to 66. Arrears recoverable from Mohamed Reza Cawn.

67 to 80. Affairs of certain Servants.

81 and 82. Loss of the three Commissioners surmised, the Instructions in that case to be carried out by the President and Council.

83 and 84. Recall of Free Merchants to Calcutta ordered.

85 to 89. New clauses to the Covenants, to prevent intrigues with the Country Powers.

90 to end. Military matters.

## No. 5. *General Letter to President and Council.*

British Museum Add. MS. 29130, p. 14.

[The next important letter is that of August 28, 1771. It is given in the form of Hastings's abstract, with the addition of the full text of special passages, taken from the *I. O. Records: Bengal Dispatches*, vol. vi, pp. 101, &c.]

*General Letter by the* Greenwich, *received August* 6, 1772.

[From Hastings's abstract.]

August 28, 1771.

1. General information of advices received from India.

[2 to 6. Shipping.]

9 to 11. Observations on the unhappy state of the Country during the dearth.

[12. Enquiry and dismissal of offenders enjoined.]

13. Disapprobation of the Perwannahs granted by Reza Cawn, and other circumstances relative to the Salt monopoly.

14, 15. Warm expostulations [concerning the above].

16. Recommendations to secure the Salt, Betelnut and Tobacco Inland trade free from the inconveniencies of monopoly; with orders to dismiss such of the Company's servants as act in violation of the Company's pleasure in these particulars, and on the like occasions to withdraw the Company's protection from such Europeans as are not in the Service.

17. Directions to send an annual account of the Salt made throughout the Provinces.

18. Reproof on Reza Cawn's conduct during the famine.

19. Commands to examine into the balances due from Reza Cawn.

20. Suspicions of mismanagement respecting the Dewanny Revenues.

21. Company's determination to take charge of the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Revenues. Authority given to divest Mohamed Reza Cawn and every person employed under his influence of any further charge or direction in the business of the Collections.

20. [From the *Bengal Dispatches.*]

(When we expected that the influence and protection of the Company would have had such happy effects throughout the Provinces of Bengal as would ensure to us a considerable increase in the revenues of the Dewanny, We cannot but be deeply affected to see ourselves disappointed in that reasonable expectation and to experience such a reverse as now appears by the great Diminution of those Revenues, particularly in the Province of Bahar. Indeed, when we turn our View to the flourishing State of Burdwan and the increasing revenue of that Province under the immediate Inspection of our servants, We cannot but conclude that the diminution of the Dewanny Revenues must have been owing to the misconduct or malversation of those who have had the Superintendency of the Collections. But as we have further reason to suspect that large sums have by violent and oppressive means been actually collected by Mohamed Reza Cawn on account of Dewanny Revenues, great part of which he has appropriated to his own use or distributed among the Creatures of his Power and the Instruments of his Oppressions, We should not think ourselves justified to the Company or the Publick were we to leave him in future the Management of the Dewanny Collections; and as the transferring the like Trust to any other Minister could yield us little Prospect of reaping any benefit from the change, We are necessitated to seek by other means the full Advantage we have to expect from the Dewanny.)

(21. It is therefore our Determination to stand forth as Dewan and by the Agency of the Company's servants to take upon ourselves the entire Care and Management of the Revenues. In confidence of your abilities to plan and execute this important Work, we hereby authorize and require you to divest Mohamed Reza Cawn, and every person employed or in Conjunction with him, or acting under his Influence, of any further Charge or Direction in the business of the Collections; and we trust that in the Office of Dewan you will adopt such Regulations and pursue such Measures as shall at once ensure to us every possible Advantage and free the Ryotts from the Oppressions of the Zemindars and petty Tyrants under which they may have been suffered to remain from the interested Views of those whose Influence and Authority should have been exerted for their Relief and Protection.)

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

22. [Hastings's abstract continued.]
Information to the Board of the commands to the President for a scrutiny into Mohamed Reza Cawn's conduct. Restitution to be made of all sums which have been withheld or embezzled from the Circar or Company.

23. Orders for an examination into Mohamed Reza Cawn's management of the trust he held under the Nabob, and of the application of such sums as passed through his hands.

24. To choose a successor to Mohamed Reza Cawn as the Minister of the Government and Guardian of the Nabob's minority.

25. Allowance to the Minister not to exceed 3 lacks of rupees.

26. Orders for the Minister's delivering an annual account of such sums as are paid by the Company to the Nabob.

27. Relative to prior orders, respecting the removal of the Members of the Council from the Subordinate Factories.

28. Seniority occasionally to give way to merit.

29. Reference to Letter of March 23, respecting full information and guidance on the subject of Monopolies.

30. Recommendations of economy for the benefit of the Company and their servants.

31. The Company's servants below Council who act as Chiefs of Factories to be considered as Residents only.

32. Matters relative to the above business.

33. The General Books of each Factory, the Buxey accounts, and all subsidiaries to their several charges, to be forwarded annually to the Directors, and positive orders that the servants at the Subordinates do not fail to specify the most minute Articles.

34. Rebuke respecting non-compliance of the Company's orders for forwarding the General Books of the Subordinates.

35. Warm remonstrances on opening the Treasury in contradiction to positive orders.

36. The Company's resolution to make their Servants accountable for the evil effects which may result from their disobedience to their orders respecting the Bills of Exchange.

37–39. Captain Affleck's case in a Bill of Exchange.

40, 41. Condemnation of measures respecting Bills of Exchange.

42. The Treasury to be reimbursed for losses owing to the above abuse, with severe orders respecting such of the Council as may have been engaged in that business and have withdrawn themselves from the service.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

43. Expostulations on the Dewanny Revenues not answering the expectations of the Company.

43. [Full text of important passage, taken from the *I. O. Records: Bengal Dispatches*, vol. vi, p. 139.]

(While we were in full expectation of reaping all the advantages we had in prospect from the acquisition of the Dewanny Revenues, and which were become the more essential to us from our Compact with the Public for a Participation of those Revenues, how greatly must we be alarmed at seeing the Dewanny Collections scarce answering any other purpose than Defraying the Civil and Military Charges of our Presidency of Bengal. Indeed, nothing but the most unhappy Experience could have led us to suppose that the Amount of those Revenues would not have been sufficient both for the Charges of your Presidency and the supplying us with annual Investments equal to our Engagements with the Publick, the Expectation of the Proprietors, the Provision of Exports, and every other Demand to which the Company is subjected. But what must be our surprise to find, that the Collective Amount of our Revenues in Bengal are so far from yielding us Returns adequate to our indisputable Occasions, that a considerable Part of your Consignments of the present Year has been purchased by Interest Notes given for the amount, notwithstanding you had received into your Treasury, for Draughts on the Court of Directors, sums equal to the whole of those Consignments.)

(44. Whatever may have been the Causes which have brought on such Effects, the Consequences are equally alarming to us, and as we learn from your late advices that the Decrease of Revenues and the Increase of Charges will not permit us to hope a speedy remedy for the Evils with which we are threatened We cannot but turn our View to the Commission which we have permitted to be drawn on the Nett Territorial Revenues, and should we continue to experience that your resources are inadequate to the Expectations we had formed of them We shall find ourselves under a Necessity to withhold from our servants those gratuitous Rewards which we were induced to grant them in the full and reasonable hope that their Care and Attention would ensure to the Company all the Advantages expected from the possession of the Dewanny.)

44. [Hastings's abstract continued.]

Continuation of the above censure with a hint of their withdrawing their gratuitous rewards from their Servants in case of non-amendment in their conduct.

45. Observations relative to the Incursions of the Marathas.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

The Company's intentions to communicate as early as possible their resolutions relative to their carrying their arms beyond the bounds of the Territories belonging to their Allies. Their approbation of the Council's conduct relative to the invasion of the province of Korah by the Marathas.

46. Approbation of Captain Harper's conduct, with their desire for his continuance in his present station.

47. Circumstances relative to Mr. Forbes [&c.].

48. Acknowledgement of advices received. Their determination to remunerate such of their Servants whose conduct and standing in their service merits their approbation.

49. Salary and emoluments granted to Messrs. Higginson, Dean & Bowey disallowed, with an order for them to repay such sums as they may have received in consequence of the indulgence. And in default those who were present when the order was established to refund the same.

50. Order to fill the vacancy in Mr. Bolts's stead.

## No. 6. *General Letter of March 25, 1772, to the President and Council.*

[The Letter of March 25, 1772, contains some passages severely censuring Cartier's administration.]

*I. O. Records: Bengal Dispatches*, vol. vi.

While your conduct in resuming the Jaghire which the late Rajah Doolubram enjoyed in the Province of Bahar and in referring to our determination the Petition of his son to succeed to his father's appointments, has at once discovered a commendable regard to our interest and respect to our authority, we have cause to complain of your having omitted to furnish us with the means of judging. . . . We are highly displeased at your disobedience to our orders of March 23, 1770, respecting the reimbursement of all such sums, which had been paid by our servants out of the commission of 2½ % to such persons, to whom we had not thought fit to assign any share thereof. . . .

We hereby renew and confirm the same [orders]. . . .

In order to discover the causes and prevent the continuance of an evil which is become intolerable to us, [the military expenses of Fort William having grown to more than double those of Fort St. George] it is our positive command that you forthwith investigate the military charges of your Presidency, even to the most minute particular, and should any abuses or mismanagement appear in conducting the business of this department, we expect and require that you not only inflict

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

due punishment upon all persons who shall have offended in this respect, but that you take all proper measures for putting an end to such practices in future.

The great increase which has of late appeared in the civil charges of your Presidency will not suffer us to suppress our displeasure at the little attention there seems to have been paid to our repeated orders for retrenching every superfluous expense. For though your civil establishment has been considerably augmented since our possession of the Dewanny, we do not conceive it possible that your charges could have swelled to so great a degree had our Governor and Council been attentive to their duty and regulated the expenses of your Presidency by a proper and requisite economy. As from the effects we have so severely felt from the insufficiency of your resources to answer the expectations we had been led to form from our late acquisitions in Bengal, we cannot rest satisfied under the present charges of your civil establishment. It is our positive commands that you enter into an immediate examination of every particular article of your disbursements relative thereto and we expect and require as you regard the continuance of our favour, that you do not permit the least superfluous charge or unwarrantable allowance to add to a Burthen which necessarily lies heavy on us. And we further direct that you send us by the earliest opportunity a full and particular state of the several charges of your civil establishment for the last year, digested in like manner as we have directed in respect to your military, that we may be enabled to discover whether the enormous extent of those charges is the necessary consequence of your Establishment or whether we can apply a remedy to an evil which threatens to deprive us of all benefit from the possessions we have acquired in Bengal. . . .

Having reason to believe that sundry of our writers and junior servants do by reason of their extravagance and dissipation contract large debts which they are unable to discharge and that they attempt to screen themselves from actions at law by obtaining leave to reside at places where the jurisdiction of the Mayor's Court does not extend, we cannot but be anxious to prevent a practice equally unjust in itself and injurious to the honour of our service, and as we deem such servants utterly unworthy our favour and protection, it is our positive command that if any of our Junior Servants shall by endeavouring to avoid prosecution from their creditors, be unable to attend the duty of their stations they be immediately dismissed our service, and sent to Europe, and we expect and require that you use every legal means in your power to

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

secure their effects for the benefit of their said respective creditors.... We must declare that if you neglect to forward to us by the ships of the ensuing season compleat copies of all books and accounts of the Society of Trade, from its institution to the closing of the monopoly, we shall not only manifest that displeasure which wilful disobedience shall deserve, but require you to indemnify the Company for any loss they may sustain by not receiving the necessary information on this subject. Besides the books and accounts of the said Society of Trade it is our express will and pleasure that you ascertain to us by letter and statement in the best manner you are able the amounts of all salt bought up by any members of the said Society of Trade whether jointly or separately between August 12, 1765 and March 1, 1766, as well as for every succeeding year, specifying the names of buyer and seller, and the quantity of salt bought and sold as aforesaid, in all cases in which such accounts can possibly be obtained. In order to this you will call before you the Banyans and other public servants of those persons who composed the *first* Committee of Trade, and all other persons whom you may deem able to elucidate the transactions hereby referred to your investigation. You are to take care that the examination of all such persons be made in the most accurate manner and so authenticated as to be of use in a Court of Judicature in England in case we should have occasion to make such use thereof....

No. 7. *General Letter of April 7, 1773, to the President and Council.*

[The following Letter is included in this appendix because it relates to the period of Cartier's Government, to which the censures contained in it apply. The last advices from Calcutta to which it refers were those of March 1772, conveyed in the East India ship *Rochford*. Hastings's rule began on April 9, 1772.]

*I. O. Records: Bengal Dispatches*, vol. vi.

Para. 19. We cannot but be sensibly affected at finding that neither the instructions we have given you nor the means you have taken for the provision of our Investment have hitherto produced any solid or effectual regulations. The plan we transmitted in April 1771 is declared by you to be impracticable, and yet in the forming of it we had been aided by those who had filled the highest stations and had recently returned from Bengal. Our object in this plan was to connect the Company and all others, Natives as well as Europeans, in one

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

common interest, and by relinquishing every claim to preference from our power or influence, to establish liberty and freedom of commerce throughout the Provinces. And although this design has proved unsuccessful we have the satisfaction to reflect that it must ever remain a testimony to our intentional justice and humanity. But we must here observe that your reply per *Rochford* to our orders on this head, is not altogether satisfactory to us. We consider so important a subject to require a deeper discussion than what you appear to have given it; for we cannot but conceive that the principal causes of the failure of our Investments might have been fully traced and the means applied for removing every obstruction. And therefore in the present distressed situation of the Company and with the public eye upon our conduct we are determined to investigate this and every other branch of our affairs with the most minute exactness which the materials before us will admit.

Para. 21. We wish we could refute the observation that almost every attempt made by us and our administration at your Presidency for the reforming of abuses has rather increased them and added to the miseries of the country we are so anxious to protect and cherish. The truth of this observation appears fully in the late appointment of Supervisors and Chiefs instituted as they were to give relief to the industrious tenants, to improve and enlarge our investments, to destroy monopolies, and to retrench expenses, the end has by no means been answerable to the institution. Are not the tenants more than ever oppressed and wretched? Are our Investments improved? Has not the raw silk of the cocoons been raised upon us 50% in price? We can hardly say what has not been made a monopoly; and as to the expenses of your Presidency, they are at length swelled to a degree we are no longer able to support.

These facts (for such they are) should have been stated to us as capital reasons why neither our orders of 1771 nor indeed any regulations whatever could be carried into execution. But perhaps as this would have proved too much, it was not suggested to us; for nothing could more plainly indicate a state of anarchy, and that there was no government existing in our servants in Bengal.

Para. 22. When we directed a general freedom of Trade, it was not possible for us to suppose that the French and others would be suffered to exercise every act of oppression over the weavers, and by force compel the delivery of their manufactures. Yet such facts appear on your records and should have

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

been exposed as other strong proofs that the Company's Investment must necessarily be loaded with the refuse and ready money goods. Sorry we are to say that silence upon this subject is by us too well understood, and although it may reflect upon the conduct of many of our servants, we cannot but enquire how the French, without money or influence, fill their ships with the prime and valuable manufactures of Bengal, and from whom they draw such large and to us ruinous resources.

Para. 23. And therefore when oppression pervades the whole country, when youths have been suffered with impunity to exercise sovereign jurisdiction over the Natives, and to acquire rapid fortunes by monopoly of commerce, it cannot be a wonder to us or to yourselves that Dadney[1] merchants do not come forward to contract with the Company, that the manufactures find their way through foreign channels, and that our Investments are at once enormously dear and of a debased quality.

Para. 24. It is evident then that the evils which have been so destructive to us lye too deep for any partial plans to reach or correct. It is therefore our resolution to aim at the root of these evils: and we are happy in having reason to believe that in every just and necessary regulation we shall meet with the approbation and support of the Legislature who consider the public as materially interested in the Company's prosperity.

Para. 25. In order to effectuate this end, the first step must be to restore perfect obedience and due subordination to your administration. Our Governor and Council must reassume and exercise their delegated powers upon every just occasion, punish delinquents, cherish the meritorious, discountenance that luxury and dissipation, which has to the reproach of Government prevailed in Bengal. Our President, Mr. Hastings, will we trust set the example, upon which much will depend. And here we take occasion to indulge the pleasure we have in acknowledging Mr. Hastings' services upon the coast of Choromandel in constructing with equal labour and ability the plan which has so much improved our Investments there: and as we are persuaded he will persevere in the same laudable pursuit through every branch of our affairs in Bengal, He, in return, may depend on the steady support and favour of his employers.

Para. 26. Your Settlement being thus put into a train of reform (without which indeed all regulations will prove ineffectual) you are next to revert to the old system when the business of

[1] *Vide* p. 37.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

your Presidency was principally performed by our own servants, who then had knowledge of our investments and every other department of our concerns. You will therefore fill the several offices with factors and writers upon your establishment, for with our present appointments we are assured these will be sufficient for this purpose, and thus you will banish idleness and its attendant extravagance and dissipation. And here we enjoin you to transmit to us a faithful and minute state of the pay and every known emolument of all below the Council—for it is notorious that even youths in our service expend in equipage, servants, dress and living infinitely more than our stated allowances can afford; we cannot but be anxious to discover the means by which they are enabled to proceed in this manner. And indeed so obnoxious is this conduct to us, and so injurious in its consequences, that we expect and require you to show your displeasure to all such as shall transgress in this respect, combining it at the same time with instances of kindness to the sober, frugal and industrious.

Para. 27. The monopoly of commerce by the Chiefs, &c., at your Subordinates has been a severe reflection upon the Administration in Bengal—for we conceive it impossible that such practices could have been long concealed, and it was in the power of the Board to apply a remedy by recalling and suspending the delinquents. But we trust you will not in future be under the necessity of exercising your authority for the abolition of this evil, and that this once effected will be a great and essential step towards the improvement and extension of our investments; especially if you follow it with complete protection to the weavers and merchants—and here we direct that you suffer no persons of any nation whatever to trespass upon the rights and dominions of the country, of which we declare ourselves the Guardians and Conservators—and since the power of the Government must continue with the Nabob, you will request him to confine foreigners within the limits of their firmaund—and therefore as the French cannot have a right you will, to the best of your power, prevent them from imprisoning and maltreating the weavers or any others under the protection of the Circar. If the French at any time think themselves aggrieved, they may as heretofore apply to the Nabob for redress, and should they disobey and spurn the orders of Government (as we find by your records they have ventured to do), it rests with the Nabob to act by them agreeably to the practice of his predecessors.

Para. 28. Having as we conceive fully investigated the causes

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

of the failure of our Investment in goodness, price and quality, and much to our concern proved also that almost every stream has been polluted, *we now arm you with our full powers* to make a complete reformation. The task we are sensible will be arduous, but we rely on your zeal for the service of the Company, and as we have the satisfaction to assure ourselves that you will not misuse the powers that we have delegated to you, we hesitate not to promise you our entire support and protection.

Para. 29. And having already revoked our regulations and orders of March 23, 1770, we now so far suspend those of April 10, 1771, as to leave the whole open to every alteration you may judge necessary and fit to make.

[Paras. 30 to 44 unimportant.]

Para. 45. As the sending our Junior Servants into the Provinces has not been attended with the wished for success, but has enabled them to monopolise the whole trade of the Country, we direct therefore that they may be withdrawn as soon as possible, and we leave it to you to substitute some other plan for making yourselves acquainted with the exact value of every district, and for giving relief to the inhabitants, till we shall be able to send you complete regulations for conducting this branch of our affairs which we have now under consideration.

[N.B.—In view of the charges brought against Hastings for subverting the whole system of the revenues in his Five years lease Settlement, it is noteworthy that the above passages are a sufficient justification. It may also be observed that the promise of the last sentence was never fulfilled, and the Calcutta Government were left to carry out the changes without further guidance.]

## No. 8. *Letter of April* 16, 1773.

[This first reply to advices of Hastings's Government is short and hurried, but contains cordial approval of the measures reported up to the date of September 5, 1772. One passage may be cited.]

*I. O. Records : Bengal Dispatches*, vi. 515.

We cannot omit the present opportunity to express the satisfaction which we receive from that readiness and zeal for our service with which you have united with our President, Mr. Hastings, in carrying into execution those essential objects which from the nature of them, we judged it necessary confidently to commit to his immediate care and conduct.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

## II. Hastings's Views and Plans.

[These documents are taken from among the Winter Collection of Hastings's papers at the British Museum. Most of them are extracts from private letters to individual Directors.]

### No. 9. *Letter to Mr. Purling, Chairman of the Court of Directors*, 1771–2.

British Museum Add. MS. 29217, p. 5.

March 22, 1772.

. . . Other evils call aloud for redress, which affect the honour, justice and vital interests of the Company. The remedy is easy and obvious, but I fear the peremptory commands of the Company oppose the application of it. The younger servants of the Company are the sovereigns or Proconsuls of the several divisions of the Province. They are the Collectors of the revenue, distributors of justice and rulers of the people. They are subject to the control of the Chiefs and Councils of Moorshedabad and Patna. These Boards, exclusive of the weak authority (if in fact it be not a mere name), which they hold over the supervisors, have other rights and powers of government in their own hands, and they are accountable to the Presidency, which I affirm to be literally devoid of all power and authority beyond the narrow limits of the town of Calcutta. Such is the present system of the government of Bengal, in which all trust, power and profit are in the hands of its deputies, and the degree of each proportionate to their want of rank in the service.

The effects of such a system may easily be conjectured. I cannot affirm them, nor do I give credit to the universal report, or the daily clamours with which I am stunned from crowded supplicants for justice. Where an excess of power is lodged in the hands of an individual, I must of course conclude that an ill use is made of it. It will be the case in 99 instances, though one in a hundred may escape it, because every dependent of the Great Man shares his authority, and has an interest to make him inaccessible to the complaints of those who suffer by their abuse of it. The obvious remedy to those evils is to redeem the authority of the Government by abolishing the Boards of Revenue, recalling the Supervisors, and bringing the Collections to Calcutta. But this is impracticable. The Company's orders forbid it, and with the recent example of my predecessor, who was dismissed, and two other

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF INDIA

members who were removed for opposing the establishment of this system, I have not the courage to touch it.[1]

Such palliations, however, as may secure the Company's income or alleviate the disorders of the country, I hope to be able to supply, the rest must depend on the future regulations of the Court of Directors.

I beg leave to repeat my assurances that your nephew shall receive from me every mark of friendship which I can show him. I was much alarmed at a complaint which was lately made to the Board against him and another gentleman, accompanied by one of the most florid and scandalous productions I think I ever read. I mean the letter of Major Grant, a man whom I have ever esteemed from an opinion of his goodness, candour and moderation. I suppose it will find its way to the newspapers, for which it is admirably calculated, and as it is big with insinuations, mysterious allusions and assertions of universal oppression, no doubt it will be greedily catched at by the multitudes who are ever ready to swallow every invective against the Nabobs of India.

I was surprized and concerned to find on my arrival that the King[2] still continued to receive the tribute of the provinces.... I think I may promise that no more payments will be made while he is in the hands of the Mahrattas nor, if I can prevent it, *ever more*. Strange! that while the revenue of the provinces is insufficient for its expenses and for the claims of the Company and our Mother Country, the wealth of the province (which is its blood) should be drained to supply the pageantry of a mock King, an idol of our own creation! but how much more astonishing that we should still pay him the same dangerous homage while he is the tool of the only enemies we have in India, and who want but such aids to prosecute their designs even to our ruin....

... as it is impossible for a state to subsist long where the dependents of the Administration are possessed of all power and the Administration of responsibility without power; and as I cannot conceive that such was the intention of the Court of Directors, my intention is—if I am supported by the Board—to attempt such a reformation as the necessity of the Company's affairs shall require, and the letter and evident spirit of their orders shall justify—I solemnly declare that I speak my real judgement when I say that the lowest of the supervisors is a man of more trust, dignity and consequence than the Governor of Bengal.

[1] But see end of letter.

[2] i.e. the Mogul.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

## No. 10. *Letter to Mr. Colebrooke, Chairman of Court of Directors* 1772–3.

British Museum Add. MS. 29127, p. 15.

March 26, 1772.

Consequence of Mr. Cartier's continuance.

I am yet in that station on this establishment in which the commands of the Company have first placed me, and I fear I shall feel the load which I am destined to sustain something heavier for the accumulated business of the present interval of suspense and inaction, the necessary consequences of an authority which is on the point of expiring. I have had time however to look about me and to contemplate the scene before me. A few words I believe will suffice to describe it. The Government of this Country consists of three distinct powers, the Supravisors, the Boards of Revenue at Moorshedabad and Patna, and the Governor and Council at Calcutta. The order in which I have named them is not accidental but consonant to the degree of Trust, Power and Emolument which they severally possess.

Present System of Revenue.

Supravisors.

The Supravisors were originally instituted for the purpose of inspecting into the Collections, the Execution of Justice, the Government and Capacity of the several Districts of the two Provinces and to report their Observations from which the Board was to form a Code of Regulations for the better Government and Improvement of the country. This design was at least laudable. If it produced no Good, it could do no Harm. But it is long since the original institution has ceased, which perhaps is yet a Secret to the Court of Directors for the same set of men continue in the same Districts, to which the idea naturally connects itself that they are still employed in collecting materials of speculation to be hereafter reduced to practice for the encrease of the population, the advancement of culture and manufactures, the enlargement of revenue, and the equal administration of justice to the inhabitants of the provinces. No, the Supravisor is the sovereign of the division over which he presides. He farms the lands to such persons as he judges most deserving preference in the distribution of them or to those whom he chooses to favour. He collects the rents. He is the Chief Magistrate.

As he is absolute and it is the invariable consequence of despotism that every inferior agent is equally despotic with his principal and most commonly governs him also, the Banyan is in fact the lord of every supravisorship. . . . All the business of the District passes through the hands of the

Banyan to his master. He chooses and nominates all the other servants and of course has it in his power to shut out all access to the Supravisor. No complaints therefore or applications can come before the latter without the permission of his Maître de palais. I do not assert that this is the case, but I have already received complaints from all quarters, which agree in this description and I think it impossible but that such effects must follow from such causes. Were the Banyan himself the appointed tyrant of the country, there would be less danger of his abusing his power to a great excess, because being responsible and having no real dignity or consequence of his own, he might be easily called to an account for his conduct, and made to suffer for it. But as his master is the responsible person, he is encouraged to go to what lengths he pleases in the certainty of impunity; and I am sure he will go to all lengths; because he has no tie or principle to restrain him. The best have none, but these are commonly the lowest of the people, who have fixed themselves to the Supravisors when they came first into the country and have risen to promotion with them. The Supravisor is often supported by strong connections either in the Council or in the Court of Directors, and they are placed both by their pretensions in the Service and the manners of their country so nearly on a level with those who should be their judges that they are secure from a very rigorous scrutiny into their conduct and totally exempt from the fear of punishment. . . . I am told also that the trade in every district is engrossed by the Supravisors, but more especially rice and the other necessaries of life. It is certainly in their power to engross them and you may judge whether they do not. I beg leave to refer you to the list of the covenanted servants for the ages of these rulers of the land and for their length of standing in the service. . . . At the same time, in justice let me add that they are in general composed of the best of the Company's servants and such as I am acquainted with amongst them I know to be men of worth and ability.

Characters of Supravisors.

The Supravisors are immediately accountable to the Boards of Revenue at the two capitals,[1] that is, they receive orders from them, make reports to them, and send them the accounts of the collections with the accounts.

Accountable to ye 2 Bds. of Revenue.

The Board of Revenue hath likewise the Government of the City and Management of the Land adjoining to it, that is they are the Supravisors of these districts, but in this charge the Naib Suba is joined to them and as far as I can learn is the

Bds. of Rev. joined to ye Naib Suba.

[1] The two capitals, Murshidabad and Patna.

acting person. This is the state of the Board of Revenue at Moorshedabad. I do not know whether that of Patna differs from it. These Boards are accountable to the Presidency, that is they transmit their accounts to it, receive their orders from thence, founded upon such materials as the Presidency is furnished with *from them.*

Gov. & Cl.: yr Duties.

It will be difficult for me to tell you what are the duties of the Government. I can only speak of what I have seen. I have been here now 6 weeks and I have joined with the Board in inspecting Raw Silk and Piece goods, in despatching a vessel to England, in negotiating the terms of a contract which did not take place with the Dadney merchants, in censuring a Captain of a ship for turning out his chief mate, in attending to a violent contest (in which I had happily no share) about a dismissed Alderman of the Mayor's Court, and in receiving from the General of the army the report of orders which *He* had given for the disposition and movement of troops . . . and of the political measures which *He* had thought proper to pursue. Do not take my word for this abstract of the acts of this government but be pleased to peruse our records of the interval which I speak of—ex pede Herculem—I am much mistaken if you find the rest more important. A member of the Board lately declared to me he could not send an agent into the country for the purchase of a single article in it, without applying to the Supravisor for his permission; and if it was granted it was looked upon as an encroachment.

Its impotency.

I have not yet been able from want of leisure from daily avocations and perpetual interruptions, which in my present situation I can only avoid by flight—to study the orders which the Company have given concerning the mode of administering their affairs; but I will not believe that they meant to invert the principles of government, to give all trust, power and emolument to the inferior members of the service, and charge the first persons in it with responsibility alone.

Proposed Remedy to a proposal for w(hat) in p(ar)t took place Six yars after ye Abolr. of Mofusul English Collns.

The remedy which I would recommend to these distractions is obvious and simple. It is not to introduce fresh innovations, but to restore the government to its first principles. To recall the Supravisors, nor suffer a Christian to remain in the country beyond the bounds of the Factories. To abolish the Boards of Revenue. To bring the Collections to the Presidency and make it the capital of the Provinces. It is the capital of the British dominions in them, and as the British power supports and rules the country, that part of it, wherever it be, from whence that power issues is the natural seat of government—to substitute any other in its stead, is to surrender the rights

and authority of government with it, and to lay the sure foundation of anarchy and universal rapine.

To restore the Mogul Constitution.

These are the remedies which naturally present themselves for the present disorders. Many other correspondent regulations will be necessary, but not one perhaps which the original constitution of the Mogul Empire hath not before established and adopted and thereby rendered familiar to the people. But it is unnecessary to mention them because none of them can be now carried into execution.

All that can be attempted at this time, will be to alleviate the effects of the present system. To change so much of it as shall be found hurtful to the Country or prejudicial to the Interests of the Company and to establish such partial and Temporal Regulations as the Letter and evident Spirit of the Company's Orders shall admit of, for the Ease of the Inhabitants and the Improvement of the Revenue. The same Expedients will serve for both.

Sep. Regns.

Such thoughts as have occurred to me already upon this subject I will immediately submit to your Inspection in their present crude and imperfect State, that you may be early acquainted with the principles and measures on which I wish to proceed. With this view I send you a paper of Regulations, which I propose to lay before the Board for immediate execution—They have already undergone some correction, and may possibly receive an entire new Form before they are completed, as I am little more than the compiler of other men's opinions, if I may not assume a greater degree of merit in saying that I have fancied expedients for the removal of evils pointed out to me by the experience of others. There is an immediate necessity for some Regulations, as this is the Season—indeed it is almost past—for making a new Settlement for the Collections of the Year. The Company have, as I recollect, recommended the letting of the Lands to Farm on long leases. This is undoubtedly the most effectual and easy way of securing and ascertaining their value. But what Farmer will dare to offer proposals if the Supravisor's Banyan is to be his Competitor, or what offers will be made by any without first consulting the pleasure of the Supravisor and his Ministers, and without allowing large Discounts from the Rents for Fees, and the losses which are to be expected from the Exactions and violence of Seapoys and the perpetual intervention of higher Authority?

New Settlement.

It is necessary therefore in the first place to give the Farmer an interest in the care and improvement of his Farm, by letting him hold it for a term of years. The next step is to

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

encourage him to offer a sum adequate to the real value of the Farm, by assurances and engagements of protection and undisturbed possession. The best caution is to guard the Tenant against the arbitrary exactions of the Farmers. These are the grounds on which the sketch is formed which I now send you.[1] It will require no other general comment. If in transcribing it I find it requires any particular Explanation it shall be added.

I hope I shall meet with no Opposition to the introduction of these, or other Laws as good, from the Members of the Council. I think they contain the sentiments of most of them.

## III. The Proposed Regulations.

[Two copies of this document exist. One is among Orme's MS. papers in the India Office Library, 'Bengal', vol. 41. The other, which I have here transcribed, is in the Hastings's MSS. at the British Museum. It is the more correct copy of the two, and includes certain passages—part of Reg. 1 and the whole of Reg. 3—which have been crossed out, but remain legible. These passages are indicated in the transcript by round brackets. It contains invaluable notes in Hastings's hand. In the index to the I. O. copy Orme has inserted a note describing these regulations as 'composed by Mr. Hastings, I believe about the year 1765'.

The internal evidence, however, though it is in no one instance absolutely conclusive, compels me by its cumulative weight to question this suggestion and to assign the document to the spring of 1772 for the following reasons.

In 1765 Hastings had quitted Bengal, and neither he nor Vansittart appears to have contemplated a return with supreme power: it is unlikely that he would at that time have produced such a scheme. The details of many of the regulations seem to indicate a later date.

Reg. 1. Provides that the Council shall consist of 12 members; this has been omitted, and no number fixed. Now in the Directors' dispatches of March 1770 and April 1771 relating to this subject a contradiction occurred and the doubt continued in the summer of 1772. Again, the practice of acting by Committees did not arise before this date.

Reg. 3. The note to this regulation refers to instances of military influence on the Council. In 1764 there was no such

[1] This is the 'Separate Regulations', p. 268, on which the Settlement Regulations and Plan of Justice (*vide* Chapters VIII and IX) were based.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

instance. In 1771–2 there was constant friction with Gen. Barker.

Reg. 6. It was impossible that the 'general cucherree' should be moved to Calcutta as long as it was the instrument of the Nawab's Ministers at Murshidabad, or be 'under the Direction of the President and Council' until the Company stood forth as Diwan, i. e. Aug. 1771.

Reg. 7. This measure appears to have been first advocated by Clive in 1768, but was not carried out even by 1772.

Reg. 9. The suggestion that Magistrates should be appointed by the President and Council would have been impossible so long as the screen of the Nawab's authority was preserved, i. e. until 1772. Indeed, the whole of these regulations are based on the assumption that native authority is to be replaced by that of the Company.

Reg. 10. The above statement is reinforced by this. The Government was deliberately eschewed by the Directors in 1765 (vide Chapter III).

Reg. 11. The Committee of Circuit fulfilled this suggestion.

Reg. 12 (i). Only the open assumption of the Diwani made it possible to discuss the method of raising the land-rents.

12 (iii). This was carried out in the five-year lease system.

Reg. 13. This change was decreed in No. 20 of the Instructions to the Commissioners, 1769.

Reg. 14, note. The effect of bringing home the revenues could not have been felt by 1765.

I have therefore treated these regulations as the outline of the Regulations for the Land-settlement and the Plan of Justice of 1772.]

No. 11. *Regulations proposed for the Government of Bengal.*

British Museum Add. MS. 29203.

1. The Council shall (consist of the President and Twelve Members, who shall) hold no distinct offices but shall preside over the several departments by Committees; (and the vacancies shall be filled up by the next in order of the Service.)

NOTE.—This is agreeable to the practise of the Court of Directors which may serve as a model. It is perhaps the only effectual means of keeping up the business in a regular manner, as it will be no longer liable to retardment from the sickness or negligence of individuals. The members of the Committee will apply themselves to their functions with more cheerfulness when they have no arrears of business to interfere with that of the day: and their authority will be sufficient to keep those who are entrusted with

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

the execution of their orders to their duty. The Zemindari[1] may be an exception to this rule as this office has the charge of the police, which requires a person of experience and authority to superintend it.

[These Notes are all in the handwriting of W. Hastings.]

2. The Governor shall be President of every Committee and Commander-in-Chief of the army whether in the field or in garrison: all military commissions shall be granted in his name, and officers shall receive their orders from him only. In military operations and treaties with foreign powers he shall have a negative voice but shall undertake nothing without the consent of his Council. In other affairs he shall have only a casting vote.

NOTE.—It may be necessary to remark upon the distinction here made between the authority of the Governour in civil and in military or political affairs, that in the former he has only the right of inspecting into every branch of state, which is customary and indeed necessary, as he is more especially intrusted with the charge of Government than any other. The latter requiring always a steady and fixed plan, often great secrecy and experience; and the nature of military discipline making it difficult to be maintained, where obedience is exacted by a body variable in its members and differing in opinions, these powers appear indispensably necessary to enable the Governour to support the executive parts of Government. But it must be expected that a discretional use only be made of those powers, and that he do nothing contrary to the advice of his Council, or without their participation, except on urgent occasions.

(Reg. 3. No Military Officer, the Governour excepted, shall sit in Council, unless when summoned to give his advice concerning military affairs.

NOTE.—It has hitherto been usual for the actual Commander of the Army to sit always as a member of the Council. I can form no better reason for this, than that such a compliment (if it can be called one) having been paid to some officer of distinguished merit, it may have thence crept into a custom. But besides the inconsistency of his profession with the affairs of the revenue or commerce, it may be added from the experience of some late instances, that the influence of military officers on our Councils is very much to be dreaded, it being their interest to keep the forces under their command always employed in the field: and few men are proof against the united temptations of Honour and Fortune.)

[This entire regulation has been crossed out and would therefore not have effect, but it is interesting as a statement of Hastings's views.]

[1] The Zemindari referred to is that of Calcutta, of which the Council had charge, one of its members acting as Zemindar.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Reg. 4. The Council shall always reside at the Presidency, except on special occasions such as Deputations, or other extraordinary commissions.

NOTE.—The necessity of this regulation will appear from a retrospect of the numberless complaints of the oppressions of our agents, which may be looked upon as the final cause of the war with Mir Cossim and of the unhappy divisions in Council which preceded it. Where men can act as they please with impunity it may be concluded that they will be guilty of oppressions. The consequence is unavoidable because the majority will be swayed by motives of self-interest and the few who are more equitably disposed will be drawn in by example. Such is the case with the agents or gomastahs of the Company's servants, dispersed in all parts of the province of Bengal; independent of the officers of Government and armed with the authority of their masters, they are subject to no control.

Their distance and the natural timidity of the people of the country, makes it difficult to enquire into the truth of the facts alleged against them. Their masters, whose immediate duty it is to bring them to justice either from a natural partiality to their own dependents; from the fear of involving their own affairs; or of lessening their own profits, which too frequently arise from the same lawless influence; are almost always their advocates and abettors, when they are accused, and are ever the last applied to for justice because it is concluded their agents do nothing without their direction or connivance. They are piqued at an appeal from their justice, and resent it on the complainants, who lie in a thousand instances at their mercy. Every individual in the Council, who are the judges, feels himself in the same situation with respect to his own agents and is consequently led to discountenance or discredit a complaint which may next be produced against himself. And if any one of them from superior views of public spirit shows himself too forward in examining into their grievances, he infallibly exposes himself to the jealousy and enmity of the rest. His zeal for justice will be imputed to selfish views and exaggerated recriminations will be brought to prove it. It must be noted here that though the Council consists usually of 12 members, 7 of these are always absent at the several chiefships to which as the places of profit the rest aspire. This consideration added to the smallness of their number and the little respect which the chiefs of the subordinate factories which engage the largest shares of the trade of the country pay to the authority of a Board consisting of their equals or inferiors in rank is the principal cause of the consequence which has been described above. An absolute remedy to this evil is not to be expected. One advantage of the proposed regulations is that the inland trade which is almost wholly confined to the subordinate factories will be necessarily drawn to Calcutta, where the several members of the Company having no natural rights above each other, it will be easier for them to adopt a plan for an equitable regulation of that trade, and the natural jealousy with which we behold the successes of others, especially one inferior in rank, will prove a most effectual check on those who are left to conduct the affairs which must be carried on at a distance from the Presidency.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

As an additional argument for this regulation, it may be observed that, as upon the present system it is for the interest of the absent members (who are the majority of the Board) to weaken its authority, which may be hurtful but cannot be beneficial to them, so by the proposed alteration they all have every inducement to unite in the support of their common rights, and of the powers by which they hold them. This will give a dignity to the Board, and add respect and weight to all their resolutions.

5. The Subordinate factories shall be put upon a footing with the Aurungs and the Investment provided by Residents appointed from the Junior servants of the Company, with a writer as an assistant to each, where the business may require it.

NOTE.—This is a consequence of the preceding regulation. It is proper also because the Investment which is the business of these factories, is now but a secondary object of the Company's attention; neither perhaps was it ever the better conducted for those expensive establishments.

It may be necessary to except from the two preceding regulations, the Factory of Islamabad, which in consideration of its distance from Calcutta and the advantages which may be derived from it as a port for shipping, may continue a chiefship under the direction of the Council.

6. The Collections of the Revenue shall be left in charge with the natives of the country and carried on by cucherries established in each Moza,[1] Pergannah,[1] Circar,[1] dependent one on the other, and lastly responsible to the general cucherree, which should be in Calcutta, and under the immediate Direction of the President and Council.

NOTE.—There are many reasons for excluding the Europeans in general from a share in this business. The other branches of the Government and Trade will be sufficient to employ all the covenanted servants of the Company, and to admit other Europeans would open the door to every kind of rapine and extortion. Men of the basest kind and worst principles would creep into office. Whatever embezzlements, whatever oppressions they were guilty of, it would be impossible to bring them to justice, because they are protected by our laws which cannot take cognizance of cases depending perhaps on the particular customs and rights of the country, or incapable of being decided from the difficulty of obtaining such proofs as the tenderness of our laws requires. There is besides a fierceness in the European manners, especially among the lower sort, which is incompatible with the gentle temper of the Bengalee and gives the former such an ascendant as is scarce supportable even without the additional weight of authority.

By the principles of justice the inhabitants of every country are entitled to a share of its emoluments, and happily the dictates of reason and sound policy, concur in giving this privilege to people,

[1] These divisions answer nearly to Tithings, Hundreds, and Counties. Note by Hastings.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

whom as our subjects, we are bound to protect, and whose subjection is the best pledge for the faithful execution of the trust reposed in them. Further reasons will occur in 12th regulation which will make it necessary to leave the Zemindar or Landholder the choice of his own collectors, since he is to be answerable for their conduct.

But extraordinary cases may happen where Sezawils or Supervisors may be appointed by the Company, in which this rule ought to be invariably observed; nor should the Zemindar himself be allowed to retain any European agent in his service. This he will hardly do of choice, and the prohibition may be useful to him in preventing such recommendations.

7. No Europeans shall be permitted to reside in the country.

NOTE.—This addition to the preceding article is necessary for preserving the quiet of the country and the authority of the magistrate which would be exposed to contempt, were every vagrant whose complexion and dress could entitle him to the privileges of the English name and influence to mix with the natives, and it would be impossible to exclude such were any admitted.

8. The Mahomatan and Gentoo (i.e. Hindu) inhabitants shall be subject only to their own laws.

NOTE.—This does not, nor can it preclude the right which the Company has to establish new regulations upon any occasion where they may be required for the ease of a subject or the better exercise or security of the Government. The equity of this proposal with regard to those inhabitants who reside without the bounds of our Settlement will not be disputed. Within the limits of Calcutta, where they are intermixed with Europeans, as well as strangers of other countries, they must necessarily be subject to the jurisdiction of the Mayor's Court. Yet even there the laws and customs prescribed by their own religion should be inviolate; and cases of property between one another decided by their own Courts. It might be wished that a provision for such a distinction might be made by charter, and powers vested in the Zemindar for the exercise of his office, which has hitherto subsisted without any legal right and is thereby liable to great impediments and discouragements and even to penalties was the rigor of the law to take place against him.

Many reasons might be urged for limiting the jurisdiction of the session courts over the persons of the natural inhabitants. In many cases the punishment bears no proportion to the fault, and in many others crimes of the highest offence have escaped unpunished by the defect of some form required by the tenderness of our laws. In a state where every man's property is secured by fixed and equal laws every violation of them may be (possibly with justice) accounted a capital offence, as aiming at the essential principles of civil liberty. But in a despotic government where the whole wealth of the nation is engrossed by a few, and the bulk of the people are liable to the severest effects of want, the laws are usually very gentle against small offences, rarely punishing theft or robbery unconnected with crimes of a more dangerous tendency with death; because human nature cannot in all cases withstand

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

the provocation to it. But in the same government murder is always retaliated by death, even the most ignominious and terrifying kinds of death. Let the justice of this distinction of punishment be examined by its effects. There are not many instances of robbery in India, where these principles prevail, scarce any of murder. A traveller may pass through a whole province unarmed and sleep in security in the open plain. He will have no enemies to dread but the wild beasts. Such being the laws by which the people of Bengal have been always governed and such their effects there can be no great objection to their continuance, but there may be a great degree of injustice in making men liable at once to punishments with which they have been unacquainted, and which their customs and manners have not taught them to associate with their idea of offence.

There are many defects in the police of Calcutta which ought to be remedied, but it is not here that the remedy can be found. One instance only, being perhaps the most grievous, may be pardoned. I mean the practice assumed by every European and the servant of every European, of arresting the person of the inhabitants, placing peons (guards) upon their houses, seizing boats and inflicting punishments in their own houses many times to a shocking degree of barbarity. Every such offence should be liable to the severest penalties of our laws, and no man's person or effects attached without an order from the acting Magistrate, or Courts of Justice, excepting in cases of treason or other matter of state where a particular power should be reserved to the Governour and Council.

In a word let this be the working principle in our Government of the people whose ease and welfare we are bound both by justice and policy to preserve; to make their laws sit as light on them as possible, and to share with them the privileges of our own constitution, where they are capable of partaking of them consistently with their other rights and the welfare of the state.

9. Magistrates shall be chosen from the natural subjects and appointed by the President and Council.

NOTE.—This is a necessary conclusion from the preceding regulations and may be further enforced by the reasons mentioned in the 6th and 7th Articles.

10. All agents and gomastahs whether of private merchants or of the Company excepting only the covenanted servants of the Company, shall be subject to the jurisdiction of the civil magistrate.

NOTE.—Whatever objections might have been urged against this claim of the Government when it was in other hands can no longer be pleaded now that we have the exercise of it in our own. It is impossible for justice to be administered or the peace of the country preserved, if individuals are allowed an exemption from the authority of Government. Even the exception proposed, though necessary will be attended with many inconveniences.

11. A certain number of Council shall be appointed to go on

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

an annual Circuit through the Provinces with powers to hear and redress grievances.

NOTE.—This expedient is barely proposed for consideration. It may be necessary during the infancy of our government and perhaps in the occasional use of it afterwards, but it is liable to many dangerous consequences, in the abuse which may be made of such powers, and in the personal disputes which must arise even from the most discrete and impartial exercise of them.

12. (i) The Rents of the lands shall be all collected under one head.

(ii) The lands shall be divided as much as they can be into Taaluks.

(iii) The valuation of the lands shall continue for a certain term of years notwithstanding any improvements they may receive; and at the expiration of such terms the lands shall be again valued and a certain proportion of the improved rents be claimed by the Government.

NOTE.—This regulation, though consisting of 3 points, yet as they have an evident connection and dependence on each other, I have considered as one, and propose only as a general outline which is to comprehend all the parts of this various and complicated subject.

(i) As an explication of the first head it will be necessary to mention that besides the (*a*) Calsa (rents paid into the King's Treasury) and (*b*) Jaghire Rents (Rents received by the Nazim for the disbursements of the State) which are often paid by the same person, various taxes have from time to time been levied on the subjects under different names (*c*) as Maratta Chout, Aboab Foujdarree, Multout, etc. etc., and by different collectors. This is the cause of great vexation to the people and much intricacy in the accounts of the Government. It is obvious that by bringing them into one amount, and lessening the number of Collectors, the people will be eased, the accounts less liable to perplexity, the expense of the collections will be lessened, and the proportion between the sum paid by subjects and received by the Government brought nearer to a level.

(ii) The 2nd Article must be considered with a due attention to the natural and just rights of the Zemindar already in possession, and can take place only in lands already divided into too minute portions; or in Forfeitures, or in the case of a failure of inheritance, such as it is likely may happen to the great Zemindari of Burdwan. The great Zemindars have been ever dangerous checks upon Government. The expensive state which they have been obliged to maintain has constantly eaten up a large part of their revenues and for the rest they have most constantly treated with the Government rather as tributary princes than as subjects. In all invasions and rebellions they have always borne a considerable part, as busy abettors to the latter, and secret encouragers of the former, the distractions of the state enabling them to withhold their rents and increase their independence. This is the state of the Zemindars in general throughout Indostan. It is true that in

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Bengal the nature of the country and the manners of the people leave it less in their power to make themselves formidable to the Government. Yet the security of the revenue is a point of such essential consequence in a time of war, that every method should be adopted that may put it out of the power of the Zemindars at any season to contest the claims of Government. The first that occurs is that herein proposed of dividing the Zemindaris into smaller districts or Taaluks. Let this be done when it can with propriety. The next and only remaining expedient is to join Sazawils or Collectors with the Zemindars, and to allow no more armed forces to be maintained in the Zemindaris than may be necessary for preserving the peace of the country and those subject only to the Sezawils or other officers of the Government.

The first actual and open revolt should be punished with a sequestration of the lands and one such example will be sufficient to restrain others within their allegiance.

After having mentioned the regard which is due to the natural rights of Zemindars it will not be foreign from the subject nor inconsistent with good policy to propose one exemplary act of justice in the restitution of the lands of Murgatcha etc. which were violently seized from the Zemindar in consequence of the treaty of Plassy and made over as a Zemindari to the Company. As the Nabob had no right to decree this unpardonable forfeiture, but that which he acquired from the Company by the power which they put into his hands, the blame of this act ultimately rests with the Company, and their name and credit has suffered much, I am afraid, on this account, in the opinions of the natives. The restitution of these estates by an authentic order from home, if there be an appearance at the same time of a regular and permanent system of Government will effectually obliterate the odium occasioned by their confiscation, and greatly conciliate the affection and confidence of the people. The loss of revenue will be trifling. We know by long possession the full value of the lands, and have a right to the proportion universally established of the nett Rents and more than that will hardly be realized by the present mode of collecting. It will not answer for the Company to descend to so minute a detail of revenues as attending to the accounts of all the inferior cutcherries with the variety of little duties connected with them. It is beneath the dignity of Government and will take up too much of the time and attention which ought to be given to the weightier affairs of the Province.

(iii) The last and most material part of this regulation is intended as an encouragement to the Landholder (by which term I understand the Zemindar or any other person of whatever degree holding lands immediately for Government) to improve his lands ; and can serve only as a general idea, many other circumstances being perhaps necessary to answer the ends proposed : such as, for example, an extension of the term for lands wholly desert, for draining marshes and recovering overflowed lands ; a compensation for the degrees of expence in the various kinds of improvement. On the whole the Landholder should be enabled to see his own profits in any charge to which he may voluntarily submit for clearing, peopling or improving his lands. By the present irregular mode of taxation the Landholder labours under every disadvantage, and risks both his estate and personal safety by every

experiment by which his income may be encreased. The established principle being to tax the Zemindar as far as he can bear to be taxed, the greatest oppressions are made use of to impose upon him even more than he can bear. The Zemindars dreading an imputation of affluence which a punctual payment of their rents would occasion and of course an increase in the demands of the Government use a thousand shifts and pretences to gain time, borrow money of the Shroffs or Bankers at an usury of 20 or 30 %, paying through their hands instead of ready money, to confirm the deceit; and I myself have known a Zemindar's Vakeel bring the full sum of his rents for payment, yet plead inability and undergo a severe whipping (a mode of collection shocking to the English manners but usual and I fear necessary in the Indian Courts) before he would produce the money. So absurd and oppressive a system cannot but be productive of effects equally injurious to the People and the State.

The Zemindars are involved in desperate debts, which the rents must pay; their lands run waste. The tenants are racked till they fly the country, the revenues are scantily and precariously received and the Shroffs and the officers of the Government by the gains of interest or Batta (exchange) and fees become rich with the spoils of the public. Let the lands be assessed by a just valuation, and the Zemindar will be able to make his payments regularly. Let him be freed from the fear of exactions, and he *will* make them regularly. He will practise no impositions on the Government. He will not squander away his means in bribes to people in office, nor involve himself with accumulated debts of interest. His tenants will be freed from oppression. His lands will flourish, and the growing rents will abundantly yield to the Government and to the Landholder the fruits of the former's wise indulgence and the industry of the latter.

13. The law by which the effects and estates of every person in office revert at his death to the Government shall be repealed, and the natural rights of inheritance shall be substituted in its stead.

NOTE.—The law here alluded to is perfectly consistent with the principles of absolute government nor in itself unjust. It appears to have been constituted as a check to the rapaciousness of those who were invested with the powers of state, but it has not usually been attended with that effect; every man possessed of power will employ it to enrich himself. His next care is to conceal his wealth, which if too conspicuous would render him obnoxious to the Government, and to secure it for his family, or as a resource for himself against the ill fortune inseparable at some time or other from his condition. The policy of these people hath hitherto discovered no better means of security than the obvious expedient of burying their treasure in the earth, which is generally done with such caution that none but the owner himself is privy to it, their fears not allowing them to trust even their children or next heirs with the secret. To the crimes which the concealment of the deposit renders necessary, superstition adds others as the means of deriving the benefit of it to the designed heir after the death of the possessor. By such means the currency of money is impeded and



NATIONAL ARCHIVES INDIA

a great (probably the greater part) of the sums thus concealed is totally lost. This may in some measure account for the little increase of specie in Indostan, though for this century past such quantities of bullion have been annually carried into it and little by any visible ways has been exported.

Having mentioned the ill effects of the law in question, it will be superfluous to point out the self-evident advantages which would follow the abolition of it. Indeed there cannot be a stronger argument for its abolition than the difficulties and inconveniences immediately attending the execution of it. It cannot be supposed that the Government is entitled by such a law to the absolute and exclusive inheritance of its servants and that their families are doomed by it to nakedness and famine. It is to be considered only as a discretionary power lodged in the hands of the Government for its own preservation, to be employed with a due and equal regard to the rights of nature and public justice. This prerogative thus stated may suit the will of a sovereign prince; but if we apply it to our system of Government and frame the idea of a Governor and Council sitting in serious debate upon the merit of a person deceased and determining from it what share of his estate shall be allowed to his children, without any standard of equity or reason to regulate their decision, nothing can appear more absurd or ludicrous. It will open a door to bribery and oppression from the influence which avarice or resentment must sometimes have on the minds of the judges and in the vigorous though just execution of it may be attended with circumstances that are even shocking to humanity.

14. All duties and imposts shall be taken off and trade made free to all people without any distinction of Dustucks, Farms or other privileges.

NOTE.—The greatest difficulty which the late acquisitions have brought upon the Company, is that of bringing home the amount of their annual revenue without impoverishing the country by draining it of its current specie. The first expedient for removing this difficulty is to invest as great an amount in goods as may be disposed of in European markets. But this amount cannot be very great; the trade will not admit of it, the rest must be received in specie or employed in furnishing the expense of the China trade, and of our other Settlements. A considerable portion of the circulating cash will be thus annihilated, and the deficiency must by some means or other be supplied or it will be continually decreasing till there is a total want of specie, and of course a total obstruction to trade and a desertion of the inhabitants. To effect this many ways must be tried. The proposed freedom of trade appears to be the best calculated for it. The province of Bengal from the fertility of its soil, the number and largeness of its rivers, its situation and the security which it enjoys from the effects of war has greater advantages for trade than any other country in Asia. But these advantages have been rendered in a great measure ineffectual by the negligence of the Mohamedan Government and by the insupportable oppressions of the numerous officers of the customs. The profits arising from this Fund to the Government barely exceed the expense of maintaining it, while the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

merchant pays an enormous and uncertain duty (under which head I rank all exactions of the chokie), is liable to continual stoppages, to long and chargeable detentions, and often to personal ill-usage and disgrace.

Were the trade once laid open, merchants from all parts of India would flock to Bengal, which furnishes every necessary of life for its inhabitants besides the superfluities required by commerce and receiving little in exchange but ready money, would draw all the wealth of Indostan by such inducements into its own channels. The merchant freed from the exactions of the collections could afford to pay a larger price for his goods and yet be a great gainer by the trade. Prices of all kinds of merchandise would probably be much increased by this means; nor will this be an objection, for the wealth thus dispensed through the country will soon find its way to the coffers of the Government by the improved value of the lands, and enable it besides to appropriate a large proportion of the revenue without diminishing, the currency which is the object principally aimed at by this regulation, though the merchant, artizan and the whole community would equally feel the influence of it.

I know but two objections that can be made to this proposal. One, that it will increase the price of the Company's investments; the other that the Dutch and other European nations, our rivals in trade, will buy their goods as cheap as ours, which by the immunities granted to us hitherto turn out cheaper than theirs. The first conclusion must be granted, but not as an objection to the proposal. The point in enquiry is by what means the Company may receive the benefit of their own revenues; not how they shall improve their trade. By the method proposed they will be enabled to bring home their revenues, but their investment it is granted will be dearer. That is, the amount of their income will fall short of that received by the former Government (allowing the sum paid to be equal) by the difference of the price of their investment. But it is to be hoped that their revenue will greatly exceed and by this very means, for the reasons given above, that of the former Government.

And if they do not adopt this plan, or some other as effectual for drawing money into the country, they cannot benefit by the possession of it. It is only the superfluous wealth that can fall to their share. The wealth of every state receives its first motion from the Government, and concenters in it, but it cannot stay there. Such an obstruction would put an end to its existence. It cannot be appropriated, but it is the necessary and inalienable right of the country, of which the Government has only the use, but this use properly managed may produce an equivalent to it.

To the second objection it may be answered that it is a point to be wished, that the other European companies may acquire benefit from our Government, that they may have no cause to regret the superiority which we have gained over them. It has been an argument employed against the stability of the Company's possessions, and even to their right to hold them, that it would involve the nation in war with the other powers of Europe, whose envy would be excited by them, and who would unite to deprive us of them. They cannot undersell us; for whatever be the market price of the goods in the first purchase we pay nothing for them



NATIONAL LIBRARY OF INDIA

but the charge of transporting them, and therefore can afford to sell them cheap. They purchase them dearer than they formerly did, and therefore cannot afford to sell them cheap.

If it be thought too much to give up the entire profits which the Company are entitled to from their duties, yet the present mode ought at least to be abolished. They may be collected on the first produce, e.g. cloths may be taxed by a fixed rate on every loom, a tax easily collected, liable to no oppression, and an encouragement to industry, as the weaver will pay the less in proportion to the quantity of cloth which he works. The duties on tobacco, betel nutt, and other products of the earth may be reimbursed by an addition to the rents of the grounds on which they are produced. And in the same manner the other articles of commerce may be charged by a tax on the first production which may be collected by the landholder and brought into the general valuation of his lands. This method is liable to many inconveniences, but it is perhaps the only footing on which the customs can be placed amongst a people too much accustomed to the principles of despotism to refrain from oppressions where they are armed with the powers of Government, or not to submit to it where such powers are executed against them.

15. The coin of the Provinces shall be reduced to one denomination, and the batta or discount on the coins of different years and different Mints abolished.

16. An alloy of Copper in the proportion of [1] per cent. shall [be] mixed with the coins of the provinces.

NOTE.—There are three established mints in the provinces, one for Bahar at Patna, and two for Bengal at Moorshedabad and Dacca: besides a fourth newly established at Calcutta, which however useful a few years ago appears superfluous at this time, as we have the command of those originally appropriated to the Government unless that of Moorshedabad be abolished to make room for it. Perhaps the regulation proposed by taking away the necessity of frequent recoinage, may make more than one superfluous. And that one ought for obvious reasons to be wherever the money centers.

The Siccas of each Mint are current only in their respective districts, being charged with a discount or Batta in the districts to which they do not belong, at least this is the case with those of Patna and Dacca at Moorshedabad. The Government usually allows an equal mixture of each by the name of current Siccas in the payment of the rents.

There are besides other ideal coins established in different places, as Dusmussa Rupees at Moorshedabad, Dusmussa Rupees of a different value at Dacca, Ely rupees at Patna, etc.

The new Sicca or the current coin of the current year is the medium by which the rest are estimated. But these again lose their value at the expiration of the year, and as they grow older are still charged with an increased Batta. And as this Batta is neither proportioned to the difference of date nor to the diminution of weight by wear, but regulated merely by the capricious wills of

[1] Left blank in original.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

the ministers or the designed impositions of the Shroffs (or bankers), the loss of the intrinsic worth of silver is sometimes exceedingly heavy.

Such a variation and uncertainty in the rate of the current coin is a great detriment to the country and a benefit only to the Shroffs and the officers of the Mint and Revenue, who buy up the old rupees at an underrated value and recoin them at a small expense into new. Something however, must be lost in each coinage and considered in a national light the expense of recoining them is absolutely thrown away since the Siccas are made no fitter by it for public use than before, and the loss which the people suffer by so arbitrary a distinction reverts in the end to the Government because it proportionately lessens the value of the revenue.

The design of the first of these regulations (15) is to free the accounts of the Government from the perplexity of so many arbitrary and unsettled distinctions, and to ease the subject and the merchant from an unjust and unprofitable tax, by allowing only one coin in the country. Thus the Siccas of this year shall retain their value as long as they retain their impressions, and the Siccas of the different mints pass indiscriminately through every part of the provinces. The practice of reckoning rupees by the weight in large sums will be a good remedy against the deficiency which time and frequent use will necessarily occasion ; but to prevent in a more effectual manner such deficiencies it is further recommended by the last regulation that a large alloy of copper be mixed with the silver for coinage ; the waste which is owing to the fineness of the rupees on their present standard justifying in some measure the Batta which they are charged with.

It will besides have another good effect in preventing the diminution of the current specie (the first object always of attention) as great sums are said to be annually carried out of the country to other parts of India on account of the purity of the silver, in which the Siccas of Bengal are held superior to those of all India. The reduction of the Batta and the mixing an alloy of 9 % with the rupees are said to have been objects of the late Nabob Meer Cossim, and probably would have been put in execution had he retained his office, and principally for the reasons here given.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

# CHAPTER VI

## INITIATION OF REFORMS

**Creation of the first British Indian State—Governor without exceptional powers—He reforms Bengal's relations with: Mogul and Vizier; Nawab and Ministers: institutes inquiries: reforms Military and Civil services.**

HASTINGS had to begin his reforms by a complete readjustment of the Company's position in India. This was hardly realized at home. Everybody in England and in Bengal was agreed that some change was required, that the Company must take over the responsibility for Bengal, and Hastings wrote to his employers: 'The affairs of the Company stand on a footing which can neither last as it is, nor be maintained on principles of private justice. You must establish your own power or hold it dependent on a superior, which I deem to be impossible.'[1] But while the Directors were so far of this mind that they assumed the Diwani, they failed to grasp what that office involved. To them the problem was simple; it meant little more than taking up in full an authority they had already held in part, and exerting it to punish those who had been guilty of oppression or peculation. Since the nominal responsibility had hitherto rested on Mohamed Reza Khan and Shitab Roy, they made these men the scapegoats and ordered their deposition and trial.

But to the Company's agent in India the problem appeared a much larger one, no less in fact than the setting up of a new independent State. This would involve at once a revolution in internal government and a total readjustment of foreign relations. What was the situation?

The Company held the Diwani by the Mogul's grant, and ruled jointly with the Nawab: yet Kora and Allahabad, the Mogul's only territories, he held as their gift, and the Nawab continued in possession of office and stipend merely by their permission. The Company still owed nominal allegiance and

[1] *Bengal Letters*, vol. ii, p. 47, Sept. 1, 1772.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

paid tribute to the Mogul. But this potentate was at Delhi in the hands of Sindhia, the Maratha chief, and the tribute of Bengal as well as the revenues of the two Oudh provinces, Kora and Allahabad, ceded to him by Clive in 1765, and shortly to be made over by him to his captors, were simply so much grist to the mill of our one dangerous rival in India.

If at last the mask of subservience was to be thrown aside and the burden of government fairly shouldered, it followed that these facts should be recognized and the Mogul treated as what he really was, a mere pawn in the hands of the enemy. A fact no less obvious was the nonentity of the Nawab. His support or protection lapsed, as it had derived from that of his suzerain, and no new system could be lasting which did not face and admit the true state of things.

In the internal government, again, Hastings saw a hundred difficulties which the Directors ignored. Standing forth as Diwan was not so simple as a mere replacement of native by English officials or an Indian by an English code of law and taxation. To begin with, the guilt of the native executive was by no means clear, nor was it clear that Englishmen were as yet competent to supply their places. Mohamed Reza Khan had co-operated loyally with Francis Sykes in efforts to stamp out the inland trade and to bring to justice recalcitrant Zemindars and aumils, and it was at least doubtful whether the charges against him of monopolizing grain were not mistaken. Shitab Roy had an even clearer record to show. Yet there was undoubtedly truth in the contention that too much power had been lodged in the hands of individuals, and, further, it was fairly certain that such magnates would not step quietly down to a lower place or acquiesce readily in English supremacy. Nor could a thoroughly English system be enforced. Hastings saw that it would conflict at a hundred points with the customs of the ancient Indian society on which it was to be imposed. He was persuaded that the modes of land-tenure, of taxation, and of justice must continue to be native in principle and in form. He declared that the reforms needed were no more than a return to the best usages of Mogul rule.[1] But to conduct

[1] *Vide* Letter to Colebrooke, p. 151

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

such an Indian system by means of an English personnel would be difficult, if not impossible. Not that he doubted their good faith or willingness. He had already a group of men about him interested in the welfare of Bengal, and asking nothing better than to bring order out of the existing chaos, but they lacked as yet the intimate knowledge of native law and custom necessary for success. Every department would require radical overhauling and reorganization, and it was essential that changes should be effected with a tact and skill which could only come from full insight into and sympathy with native traditions. The problem which confronted Hastings was vaster and more complicated than his employers realized. He stood practically alone to deal with it, and the authority entrusted to him was little more than nominal. In the first few months of office he was handling all these internal and external problems at once and found them 'as confused as Chaos itself'. They must, however, be examined separately, and the question of the relations with the 'Country powers' comes naturally first.

In June 1772 Hastings left Calcutta and went up to the old capital, Murshidabad, whence he could examine the state of the provinces and also be in touch with the northern frontier. The root of the whole tangle lay in the relations of the Company to the former rulers of Bengal, and to secure sound internal reforms he must first regulate those relations. He saw that the recognition of the Mogul was a mere anachronism: the treaty based upon his sovereignty had lost its sanction when he lost his independence: allegiance had become a dangerous farce and the payment of tribute drained Bengal of its currency. Hastings resolved to throw off the allegiance and save the tribute for his employers, who had already authorized such a step. He has been attacked for this measure, and his own justification of it deserves study.[1] This resolution was soon tested. At the end of the year 1772 the Mogul sent a vackeel with the customary presents of 'two changes of raiment' and an order for the tribute. Hastings

[1] Strachey, *Rohilla War*, p. 59: 'In the King we have another idol of our own creation,' &c.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

tells how he received him: 'As I see no use in excuses and evasions which all the world can see through, I replied to the peremptory demand of the King for the tribute of Bengal by a peremptory declaration that not a rupee should pass thro' the provinces till they had recovered from the distresses to which lavish payments to him had principally contributed.'

By this measure Hastings stopped one channel of loss to Bengal and gain to the Marathas. It remained to divert the second, and to build a firm rampart against them in an alliance with Oudh.

The Directors in their 'Instructions' deprecated the formation of any treaties or alliances as likely to entangle them in the quarrels of the native powers; but they had insisted that the prime object of policy was the security of Bengal, and Hastings held that this could not be maintained unless Oudh became a barrier against the Marathas. But at this time the province of Oudh, regarded as a buffer state, had two weak points. In the first place, the fact that its southern districts, Kora and Allahabad, the high road from Delhi to Patna, had been detached from it and made tributary to the Mogul, who was unable to defend them, undermined the Vizier's position and made a gap in the rampart at the point of chief strategical importance. To the north Oudh marched with the lands of the Rohillas, an Afghan race of freebooters. Unstable in any case, they were in the spring of 1772 at the mercy of the Marathas, who had just captured their capital, Sekketoul. The Vizier was thus liable to be taken between two fires and could be of little value as an ally, unless by acquiring both these districts he could secure the sound, natural frontier of the Ganges stream along his whole western front. The revenues of Kora and Allahabad, if restored to him, would both ensure his loyalty and also be withheld from the Maratha war-chests. Thus Hastings found it incumbent on him, while profiting by the grant of the Diwani, to undo the work of Clive as much in external engagements as by the overthrow of the dual system of internal government, and his letters to his great predecessor reflect this divergence of policy in their guarded courtesy.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Independence and security for Bengal, as well as a large sum for the treasury, were attained when Hastings, at the price of 50 lacs, restored to the Vizier the possession of his forfeited provinces. There was by this time little fear that Shuja-ud-Daula would side with the enemies of Bengal, for the Marathas were a greater menace to him than to the English, and this new arrangement was likely to procure him the life-long enmity of the Mogul. It was therefore to his interest to remain the loyal ally of the Company, and a further financial advantage was secured by assigning a brigade of the Company's troops to protect his territories on condition that he took over the responsibility of their maintenance, reckoned at 1,20,000 rupees per mensam.

These arrangements with external powers were not completed till September 7, 1773, after Hastings had had intercourse for three weeks with the Vizier at Benares. A joint expedition to subdue the Rohillas, and by annexing the territory they had seized to secure Oudh on the north-west, was also planned at this time, and on its execution a few months later the services of the English brigade were requited by paying the Company a further sum of 40 lacs. Both the Council at Calcutta and the Court of Directors at once gave this transaction their hearty approbation. The reason is not far to seek. In this, as in the other agreements, the new Governor had two motives: first and, in his view, foremost, the determination to safeguard the strategic position of Bengal; second, the desire to effect economies, a matter which came first with his employers. This double aim was the inevitable result of his anomalous position as vicegerent, not for a king, but for a company of merchants, and during his long rule he often contrived to remove a menace or check an abuse while reaping a golden harvest for the treasury.

The Calcutta treasury had not only to finance Bengal and to raise enough funds to make the investment for each year, but also to provide for the deficiencies of Madras and Bombay. Both Presidencies applied to Calcutta as a matter of course whenever they failed to make two ends meet, to say nothing of the enormous sums which had eventually to be

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

raised to rescue them from the enemies their rashness had provoked at Poonah and in Mysore. Hastings, like the younger Pitt, became famous for his conduct of inevitable wars, but was as averse from them in Asia as Pitt was in Europe. Both were at heart enthusiastic economists and recognized peace as the essential basis for any solid advance in the well-being of their people.

The refusal to recognize the Mogul's shadowy authority was the prelude to the subjection of his former vassal, the Nawab, a rearrangement already decreed by the Directors and following naturally upon the first.

The stipend of the young Nawab Mubarek-ud-Daula was 32 lacs per annum, little more than half the 52 lacs allowed by Clive to his father. But whereas Mir Jafar had then been the Lord of Bengal and the Company had wished to be considered his servants, the positions were now reversed. By standing forth as Diwan the Company would in practice become responsible not only for the Diwani, i. e. the revenue and civil administration and for defence, but also for the Nizamut, which they had rendered powerless, the criminal and police jurisdiction, and every other burden involved in the government. It was not unreasonable then to think that half the amount hitherto received should be sufficient to uphold the dignity of the Nawab's sinecure. The Court of Directors ordered the stipend to be reduced to 16 lacs.

The Nawab was a minor, and the disposal of his 32 lacs with the management of his household had been in the hands of Mohamed Reza Khan, who was now to be displaced and tried, and it became necessary to rearrange the Nawab's entourage on a more economical basis. This delicate task was undertaken by Hastings in person. He was anxious to do away with the office of Naib Suba and to distribute the various functions comprised in it, so that no one individual about the young Prince might have a footing for ambitious schemes. With this view he gave the charge of the household to a lady, the Munni Begum, mother of the late Nawab Nazim. As the widow of Mir Jafar, she had the advantage

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

of seniority and experience. To act under her in those affairs which a Mahomedan woman could not transact in person, Hastings appointed as Diwan Nazim, which now meant little more than Master of the Household, the Raja Goordass. He was the son of Nuncomar, a certain Raja who had held various offices and been active in all sorts of intrigues at the courts of Mir Jafar and Mir Kasim, and was a bitter enemy of Mohamed Reza Khan. He was suspected of disloyalty to the Company, and as Resident at Murshidabad during the years 1757 to 1764 Hastings had, by thwarting his machinations, incurred his bitterest enmity. But it was certain that no one was better informed of the secret doings of the Court and Nizamut than Nuncomar, and the Court of Directors privately instructed Hastings to make use of his information in the trial of Mohamed Reza Khan. For this purpose it would be necessary to conciliate Nuncomar, but, on the other hand, it was dangerous to entrust him with any power. By giving this subordinate appointment to his son Goordass, a man of quiet disposition, Hastings found the happy mean. The appointment met with hot criticism from his Council, to whom Hastings did not consider himself free to divulge his instructions, but it took place and its results were satisfactory to the Government. Three years later, when factious English Councillors formed a party against the Governor, Nuncomar found his opportunity to deal him an ungrateful blow.

It was still necessary for Hastings to lend his nominees personal support in effecting the retrenchments required by the reduction of the Nawab's stipend. While the English would now take over the administrative expenses of the Nizamut, there remained a host of ceremonial charges and pensions included under that head, and the business was not concluded till October 1772. To conduct the settlement and these important readjustments in person, Hastings left Calcutta in June and spent the summer at Kasimbazar and the old capital. It was not until his return to the new seat of Government in September that the retrospective inquiries on which the Directors were bent could be taken in hand.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

The trials of Mohamed Reza Khan and Shitab Roy came first, for their arrest had of necessity preceded the reorganization of their offices, and they had now been for some four months in honourable captivity at Calcutta. During this interval every effort had been made to investigate their conduct, but without much success. Their removal from office was enough to raise up against them a swarm of accusers, but to determine how far the evidence offered was genuine and not malicious was almost impossible. The records of their offices were overhauled, but the foreign characters and the intricacy of detail in which they were presented rendered them almost unintelligible. The net result was a verdict based inevitably rather on the general character of the prisoners in public opinion, both native and English, than on a strict process of law.

Mohamed Reza Khan had been the virtual ruler of Bengal for seven years. As Naib Suba he had handled 32 lacs of the Nawab's stipend and 9 lacs of his own; he had had control of the native troops and of criminal magistracy and police matters in virtue of his office as Naib Nazim; as Naib Diwan he had controlled civil justice and revenue affairs. He had thus in his hands the whole native patronage. It is true he was under the direction of the English Company, but, on the other hand, their view of native men and affairs was largely dependent upon his reports. Power so concentrated in one person and with such imperfect checks upon it could hardly fail to be abused in so venal a period, and there seems to have been little doubt in the minds of his contemporaries that Mohamed was guilty of peculation, though not of the graver crime of enhancing the famine. Since clear proof was not forthcoming, and to prolong the trial indefinitely would have been equivalent to inflicting punishment, he was released, but not reinstated.

The case of Shitab Roy was less dubious. It had been necessary to displace him for reasons of policy, and convenient to include him in the suspicion that surrounded Mohamed, but the Directors had nothing tangible against him. He too was acquitted, and the result of these trials only confirmed

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Hastings in his original dislike of the inquiries as a waste of time and worse. For Shitab Roy, the old hero of Patna, who had fought gallantly beside Captain Knox at a crisis in the Company's career, died broken-hearted from the disgrace of his imprisonment before any reparation could be made to him. As the Governor declared, the English could not expect to be served so loyally again by native chiefs. Happily the story of India has again and again given the lie to his fears, but they were not unnatural.

If the trial of native magnates was distasteful to Hastings, an inquisition into the conduct of his fellow servants was still more unpleasant. If he began with accusations, how could he hope for the confidence and hearty co-operation of his colleagues? But the Company's orders to make prompt and thorough investigation were the more urgent because they saw a chance of levying considerable sums from the offenders. The Governor was bidden to institute three several processes:

1. A retrenchment of the civil and military establishments.
2. The restitution of the surplus revenue donation.
3. The prosecution of inland traders.

With the last he was in entire sympathy. Arrears of duties were soon recovered from the late Society of Trade; the case of Mr. Lushington, who had been accused of engrossing grain during the famine, was taken in hand forthwith, and Hastings's new systems of Revenue collection and of Justice were directly calculated to stamp out these old monopolies.

The second was a more dubious and difficult matter. Besides the commission—originally 2½%, later raised to 5%—on the revenue, granted by the Directors to their servants on the abolition of the inland trade, a surplus had arisen from a reduction in the amount paid to the Nawab by Cartier's Government. The Council, without waiting for authority from home, had distributed it among their colleagues. This wounded the Directors in their tenderest parts; purse and dignity smarted together, and it became a point of honour with them to visit with disgrace so dangerous a precedent and to

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

recover the money. Hastings, even if he had shared their indignation, could hardly have procured them satisfaction. Many of the recipients had already left India, and months of delay must needs occur while their attorneys communicated with them; the restitution of sums, perhaps already expended, was problematical at best, and if secured in one case and not in another, would constitute a penalty on the most honourable. But by far the most serious objection was the waste of time urgently needed for reforms, without which the machinery of government could not be set up. A further reason against this inquisition was the Governor's lack of power. For an operation so apt to engender resistance, it might be thought that he would receive exceptional powers. But the fact was that his supremacy over the rest of the Council consisted in nothing more than the warrant of the Directors' private dispatches and the right to a casting vote as Chairman. A Select Committee was still associated with the Governor, as in 1765, to handle matters of special importance, but in that, as in the larger body, he depended rather on prestige and personal influence to secure his aims than on any exceptional powers.[1] If the Council or Committee chose to oppose his policy, he had no resource but an appeal to England, quite useless for immediate purposes, since a year at least must elapse before any reply could be received. In point of fact, owing to the investigations preparatory to Lord North's Regulating Act, the Directors were too preoccupied during the years 1771 and 1772 to correspond at all fully with their Calcutta servants. This is a matter of some moment when the autocratic nature of Hastings's rule is in question. It was hardly to be expected that a man who for eighteen months ruled huge provinces without guidance from his superiors should not develop a self-reliance which at times amounted to independence. The Governor had in any case to rely on his own tact and leadership to secure the loyal co-operation of his fellow workers, and in this Hastings excelled. Clive had dominated his associates; Vansittart, Verelst, and Cartier had at times disputed with them, and at times yielded; Hastings persuaded.

[1] Gleig, vol. i, p. 371, and Appendix, Chap. VI, p. 200.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

The general testimony of his unbiased contemporaries and of his correspondence shows him as a genial, attractive personality, with too shrewd a sense of humour to stand on his dignity, too keen insight to be harsh, and too much resolution to be browbeaten.

In his first Council he encountered two opponents of very different calibre. General Barker, the Commander-in-Chief, had for some time past been assuming an independence against which Cartier's Council had had to appeal to the Directors. To him Hastings issued directions that admitted of no question, and while inviting the General's advice and seeking to profit by his experience, made it clear that in his hands the civil authority would brook no rival. In Mr. Barwell he had to deal with a well-meaning and indefatigable Councillor, experienced in revenue affairs, but apt to clog the wheels of debate by pertinacity about details and readiness to think himself slighted. Forced by the pressure of affairs to curb his prolixity, Hastings yet managed to convert him into a stanch ally, and it was by Barwell's sole support he was able in after-days to weather the malicious opposition of Francis and his crew. The achievement of harmony at the Council Board made it possible to proceed to those retrenchments which were demanded in the military and civil establishments.

To enforce reforms on the Company's military service needed a master-hand. For the problem of the due subjection of the military to the civil executive, that ever-present difficulty of rulers who owe their power immediately to the sword, was at the moment acute in Bengal. In India this was, and may continue to be, a live question, for the government rests too closely on a military basis and is too liable to the sudden alarms of native irruption or incursion, from Clive's day almost to our own, not to feel the weight of its defensive armour at times a little burdensome. But it is precisely this persistence of similar problems that gives interest to Hastings's correspondence. His views appeal to us just in proportion as they were too advanced for his contemporaries. He has been thought to have erred on the side of a despotic use of militarism, but we find him insisting to the Chairman of Directors

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

on the supremacy of the civil authority.[1] The insubordinate temper which he had to combat was no mere lack of discipline among subalterns. The negotiations which commanders, employed at a distance from Calcutta, were often obliged to initiate were apt to induce in them a sense of independence. Sir R. Barker challenged and even ignored the orders of the President and Council.[2] In the case of Captain Harper, with which he had to deal in the first months of his rule, Hastings secured the General's obedience without giving him an opening for controversy; in the case of the court martial of two subalterns for defiance of the Mayor's Court,[3] and also in the case of Lieutenant Dunbar, an officer of the Pargana Battalions, who had been guilty of cruelty to a native debtor, he enforced severe penalties.[4] All these matters, trivial in themselves, indicate how difficult it was for a company of merchants to establish due control over the soldiers of whom they were forced to avail themselves. The Mayor's Court had been instituted long before the need for troops had arisen, yet his was the only jurisdiction to which Europeans were subject, and it had become necessary to extend it far beyond the bounds of Calcutta or to leave the officers as well as the factors free to do as they chose in the provinces. Neither alternative recommended itself to Hastings. Perceiving the need for a special authority to deal with men so uniquely placed as the Company's European captains, he set the especial post of Judge-Advocate for the army on a new footing.[5] The custom of duelling was forbidden to officers, and another measure taken to remove the pitfalls which beset inexperienced subalterns. This was the suppression of the Pargana Battalions. Employed in the unsoldierly work of tax-gathering, these troops were undisciplined and brutal.

[1] British Museum Add. MS. 29127, Appendix 20, Letter to Colebrooke, 1772.

[2] Gleig, vol. i, p. 254; *Bengal Letters*, vol. x, p. 341; *Bengal Secret Consultations*, Range A. 25, pp. 207–8.

[3] *Bengal Public Cons.* 56 (10), March 28, 1774.

[4] *Bengal Public Cons.* 52, October 10, 1772; *Bengal Letters*, vol. x, p. 163; vol. xi, p. 402; *I. O. Records, Wilkes's Miscellaneous*, December 16, 1773.

[5] *Bengal Letters*, vol. xi, p. 403, para. 18–20.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

They had to be scattered up and down the country in small parties and under insufficient control, so that it was impossible to inspire them with a truly military spirit. They plundered the peasants and terrorized the Zemindars with impunity, and jealousy of their ill-earned gains threatened to demoralize the regular sepoys. Hastings had, in 1772, reorganized the revenue collections so as to preclude the need for this rabble, and they were accordingly abolished. To disband them would have been to let loose a flood of marauders on the province; they were consequently placed on the same footing as the regular troops and under the strictest discipline, and by degrees incorporated in the three brigades.[1]

The country was in truth in a very disturbed condition, with which neither police methods nor the ordinary course of justice, however wisely reformed, could be expected to cope. Special measures were required to deal with the widespread dacoity and with the marauding bands of Bhutanese and Sunnyasis.

Dacoits formed a standing trouble present in all parts of the provinces and at all seasons of the year. Their bands varied from small parties to troops of 400 or 500, and were recruited from the inhabitants by the pressure of want or hope of plunder, but the majority were 'robbers by profession and even by birth'; as Hastings wrote, 'they are formed into regular communities and their families subsist by the spoil which they bring home to them; they are all therefore alike criminal, wretches who have placed themselves in a state of declared war with Government, and are therefore wholly excluded from any benefit of its laws'. This evil had grown to enormous proportions chiefly through the impotence of the Faujdars since the collapse of the native system, and Hastings now proposed to restore this officer and his subordinate, the Thanadar,[2] and to take drastic measures to hunt down and extirpate the dacoits.

He enacted that every convicted dacoit should be executed in his own village with all the forms and terrors of law; his

[1] *Bengal Secret Consultations*, Range A. 25, pp. 28 and 325; *Bengal Letters*, vol. xi, p. 353 (17).

[2] pp. 271, 275.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

family made slaves, and every inhabitant of the village fined. No milder punishment would avail. Imprisonment was merely the convenient provision of food and shelter,[1] Hastings declared: 'We have many instances of their meeting death with the greatest insensibility, but when executed in the midst of the neighbours and relations, when these are treated as accessories and the family separated for ever from each other, every passion which before served as an incentive to guilt now becomes subservient to the purposes of society; at the same time their families, instead of being lost to the community, are made useful members of it, by being adopted into those of the more civilized inhabitants. The apparent rigour will be no more than a change of condition by which they will be no sufferers, and is the only means we can imagine of dissipating these desperate and abandoned societies.'

Startling as these proposals may be to the modern mind, they were not so great a departure from the methods of the eighteenth-century judge, even in England, and were calculated to root out a caste of hereditary criminals and to reform the material from which they were recruited.

The Sunnyasis Hastings describes as 'wandering faquirs who annually infest the Province . . . in pilgrimage to Juggernaut, going in bodies of a thousand and sometimes even ten thousand men. They inhabit the country lying south of Tibbet, from Caubul to China. They go mostly naked, rove continually from place to place, recruiting their numbers with the healthiest children they can steal. Many are merchants; they are all pilgrims, and held by all castes of Gentoos in great veneration.' This popular regard rendered it difficult to deal with the marauders. In the autumn of 1772[2] a party of Pargana sepoys was sent from Rungpore to hunt them down, but was itself destroyed, owing to a want of discipline, and its officer killed. The Council then determined on creating a new mobile force of Light Infantry to supplement the three brigades, and at the same time, in February 1773, did away with the Pargana establishment. Their worthless character was

[1] Sir J. FitzJames Stephen, *Nuncomar and Impey*, vol. ii, p. 131.
[2] Gleig, vol. i, p. 282.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

maintained to the last, for Captain Edwards, sent with three Pargana Battalions to retrieve the earlier disaster, met a like fate, his sepoys deserting him in the face of the enemy. The conduct of a body of regulars, under Captain Robert Stewart, displayed a fine contrast, first defeating the Sunnyasis and then, in conjunction with a similar force, clearing Kuch Behar of the Bhutanese who had overrun it, and from whom the Raja had appealed to the Company for protection. The account of the discipline which Stewart enforced has come down to us in its original terms and gives a vivid picture of the early days of the service.[1]

The four new regiments of light troops were maintained on the frontier to deal with any fresh incursions.

Another force was employed under Captain Brooke to 'reduce to subjection the refractory mountain chiefs, whose countries are situated between Monghir, Boglepore, and Beerbhum'. These were some of the most ancient tribes, Kols, Santals, &c., still living a semi-savage existence and annually, on the exhaustion of their own scanty crops, descending to plunder the lowlands. Their territory was known as the Jungle Terai; it could not be dealt with like the more settled districts, and Captain Brooke was consequently left to organize his conquest there, which he appears to have done with success, to judge from a report of the district delivered to Hastings in 1778 by his successor, James Browne.[2]

For overhauling the various civil offices both at the Calcutta head-quarters and at the inland factories, Hastings's instrument was the Board of Inspection, which had been in existence, but inactive, since Clive's second administration. Through its agency he cut down, in accordance with the ideas expressed in No. 5 of his Proposed Regulations, the numbers of the personnel and the display and luxury which they had maintained at the Company's expense. Hitherto it had been advisable to lay out a certain amount on ceremony to uphold their prestige as the Company's representatives, but the accession of real authority under the new régime would in future obviate the need to rely on appearances as far as the actual administrators

[1] *Vide* pp. 214, 215. [2] pp. 217, 218.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

were concerned, while those servants who were continued in charge of the investment had no further need of such prominence.

For the distribution of these different functions we must turn to the account of the Committee of Circuit, Hastings's instrument, and to the great reforms of the Revenue Settlement and of Justice which he effected by its means.

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VI

[The following nine documents are taken from various sources, including both private and public letters from Hastings. They deal either with the external policy or the reorganization of the Nawab's Government.]

### No. 1. *Letter to Mr. Purling, Chairman of the Court of Directors 1771 to 1772.*

British Museum Add. MS. 29127, p. 8.

March 22, 1772.

... I learn that the Marattas ... are approaching very far towards Us from the Northward, having defeated and dispersed the Rohillas and opened a free passage through their Country to the Dominions of Shuja Dowla our ally. ... Sir Robert Barker, who is with him, represents him as much disturbed by it. Sir Robert has sent orders to the 1st Brigade, which was at Patna, to march immediately to the relief of the Vizier. But the Board have disapproved of that act of Authority. ... They are ordered however to halt wherever they may be and wait for further orders. ... The Marattas cannot easily complete the Reduction of the Rohillas in so short an interval as is left for the Commencement of the Rains; and should they either attempt the Invasion of the Vizier's Dominions or even to quarter themselves in the Rohilla Country lying on the North side of the Ganges, I think they will be at our mercy if we have a force near enough to march against them, as the Ganges is at that time impassible, and their escape would be cut off from the Northward by the Hills and roads which divide India from Tartary. It is most probable they will do what mischief they can while the dry season permits them and recross the Ganges before the Rains. If they do not and the Vizier solicits our aid and will engage to

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

furnish the Means for payment of the Charges of the Detachment, it cannot with Propriety be refused him. He is himself so weak that without our aid he must fall. They will most certainly fall upon him when they have rid their hands of the Rohillas and we must maintain him to save our Countries from Devastation. . . . This Province is by no means in a state suited to war. It wants an interval of Peace, Security and quiet Cultivation to retrieve its late Calamities. Yet if the Marattas proceed with the same rapid success which they have hitherto met with, I fear nothing but a War prosecuted against them with Vigour at a distance from our Borders can ensure Peace and Quiet to Bengal.

## No. 2. *Letter to Clive.*

British Museum Add. MS. 29127.

November 12, 1772.

My Lord,

I have received your commands by the *Lapwing* and a duplicate by a later packet. I am sensible of the honor which Your Lordship has done me in the very friendly communication and equally obliged by the good advice which it contained.

No man is better acquainted than Your Lordship with the political interests of the Company in Bengal nor with the difficulties and embarrassments of Government. I cannot therefore wish to profit by a surer guide than your counsel and your example [or 'experience'. A contraction in the MS. would admit of either reading]. I shall adopt the principle of both and endeavour to carry them into execution although in a different line from that which a different situation of affairs required Your Lordship to pursue. It will be my study to confirm without extending the power of the Company in this Country, to cultivate the arts of Peace, to establish a regular Administration of Justice, to reduce the enormous expenses of the Company to fixed bounds, and to prune them as much as possible from remote wars and foreign connexions.

In most of these points I find myself supported by Your Lordship's judgement. They are rendered more particularly necessary at the time by the incredible injury which the Country has sustained by the famine and mortality of 1770, and the general licentiousness which seems to have prevailed since we took the internal administration of the Provinces out of

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

the hands of the former Government, and placed them without any fixed system in those of our agents.

I would gladly acquaint Your Lordship with the detail of the transactions of the late Government but a subject of such a nature demands a larger portion of time than I can borrow from the immediate duties of my station at this time to give such an exposition of it as I should wish. Indeed I had no intention when I sat down to this letter of expressing more than my thanks for the kindness which you had conferred on me in yours. I beg leave to assure Your Lordship that your letter shall be sacredly confined to my own inspection and that I shall esteem myself obliged in the highest degree by a continuance of them.

I accept with much pleasure of the trust which you have been pleased to repose in me and shall punctually follow your instructions. I shall advise Your Lordship again by the *Greenwich*, which will sail in about 5 weeks.

I have the honour to be, My Lord,
Your Lordship's most obedient and obliged servant,
WARREN HASTINGS.

No. 3. *Letter from the Secret Department of the Calcutta Council.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xi, p. 1.

September 5, 1772.

Para. 1. [The Marattas have retired as expected.]

Para. 2. [The Vizier has made a treaty with the Rohillas to defend them and requisitioned the Company's help . . . the Company is not bound] to engage with him in distant schemes [but] 'we mean to grant him an effective support within the Limits of his own Dominions . . . we mean most steadfastly to adhere to the Line you have laid down for us and *to avoid without absolute necessity all* Military Operations foreign to the immediate Defence of these Provinces, and those of your Ally. We cannot however forbear from declaring our Apprehension that the Marattas' Ambition and Enterprize *will bring that Necessity to a nearer period than we could wish*, especially since they have acquired possession of the King's Person and the Sanction of his Name, and are freed as we understand by their Treaty with Hyder Ally Cawn from any diversion on his part.

(N.B.—This letter is not signed by W. Hastings, but corrections in his hand seem to indicate that it was revised by him before dispatch. He returned to Calcutta from Cossimbazar on this date.)

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

No. 4. *General Letter, Secret Department.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xi, p. 189, &c.

December 10, 1772.

Para. 5. . . . It was about the time that Shah Alum had abandoned his residence at Corah to throw himself into the arms of the Marattas in prosecution of his idle scheme of restoring the Mogul Empire to its antient dignity and extent. . . . [It was] the general belief that the Marattas were preparing to invade the province of our Ally the Vizier and even enter Bengal. We judged it highly impolitic and unsafe to answer the drafts of the King [despatched by an adventurer, called Major Morrison] till we were satisfied of his amicable intentions and those of his new allies, and indeed independent of this the state of our Treasury rendered it impracticable to comply with these payments or with those which he would doubtless have continued to demand in full of his Stipend, as it was then empty of Cash, besides that the great amount of our debt at Interest required our first attention to its diminution and the immediate discharge of the Interest due upon it instead of squandering away the wealth of the Company on a Pageant of Authority from whom you can never derive any real benefit—and on these grounds we have suspended the Payment of his Stipend until this time.

Para. 6. In pursuance of our Resolution on the operations of Suja Dowla . . . we issued orders for the march of the 1st Brigade into that Prince's Dominions under the command of Colonel Champion with the strictest Injunctions not to suffer a single Sepoy to pass the line of his Frontiers under any Pretence whatsoever.

No. 5. *General Letter from the Select Committee.*[1]

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xi, p. 197.

January 15, 1773.

Para. 2. The King's accustomed malevolent Fortune seems at this time to have exerted its utmost influence, for as neither Party would recede from their pretensions a Battle ensued, which after an obstinate conflict of some hours terminated in the total Rout of the best appointed Army the King has ever possessed, and he became once more a Prisoner in the hands of the Marattas.

Para. 4. He has ceded to them the Provinces of Corah and

[1] *Vide* p. 53.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Kurrah[1] and they have obliged him to appoint Zabita Cawn Buxey of the Empire with the proprietary of those lands usually annexed to this Office. They require him to make over all the Country conquered from the Jauts,[2] to pay Him the Ballance of the Sums he promised them when he first joined them and to remain constantly in their Protection.

Para. 9. How far our engagements ought to influence us in defending him in the right of Possessions we know to have been forcibly wrested from Him, at a time when no publick act of his can be deemed valid and when there is great Reason to imagine he will himself solicit our Assistance to protect them, or how far at this junction it would be political or expedient to interfere must remain undetermined untill we have sufficient leisure. . . .

Para. 10. In the meantime as the fortress of Allahabad is of the greatest consequence and the only post belonging to the Vizier on that side of the River we have judged it proper to direct Col. Champion . . . to defend it.

No. 6. *General Letter, Secret Department.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xi, p. 358.

March 1, 1773.

Para. 9. The circumstances of the King's surrendering the Province of Cora to the Marattas hardly, as we have observed before, makes any difference as to our Situation with regard to that Turbulent and Ambitious People. They before declared their Intentions of attacking the Vizier and by their Motions (have) shewn themselves ready to fall upon him. Our Interest, our Engagements obliged us to take up his defence, and our meeting his Enemies in the above-mentioned Provinces instead of receiving them in his own proper Dominions was as consonant to this principle as it was conformable to our connexions with the King and the Interest which we have in the Protection of his Demesnes. We still act on the Principles we set out of protecting our Allies without forming any Designs against other People. In no shape can this compulsory Cession by the King release us from the Obligations we are under to defend these Provinces which we have so particularly guaranteed to him and which his own Vice-Roy Minear ul Dowlah at this time puts under our Protection. . . .

[1] Kurrah or Karrah was one of the nine circars of Allahabad, containing twelve mahals. It is represented to-day by the ruined town of Karrah, forty miles north-west of Allahabad, on the right bank of the Ganges.

[2] A numerous race in the North-west and bordering provinces. See map for position in 1773.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Para. 10. We have not however neglected in undertaking these measures to stipulate for such Subsidiary Payments as will defray all extra expences incurred by them, and the Precautions we have taken to ensure the punctual Discharge of them will, we persuade ourselves, free us from any Hazard of suffering by the Charges of this Expedition, as we have been peremptory in our Declarations and Orders on this Subject we mean most rigidly to abide by them.

Para. 11. We must however observe that we have extended our Orders in one Instance beyond the absolute line of the Vizier's Dominions. We refer to what we have instructed the General respecting the Country of Hafiz Rahmut Cawn, a small territory lying on the eastern side of the Ganges. Our Reasons however are obvious. By allowing the Marattas to get a Footing there the Frontier on that Side, having no natural boundary or Defense, would be continually exposed to their Incursions, as by excluding them from this Space We form a compleat Field of Operations with the River for a Barrier difficult at all times for an enemy to pass and dangerous to them in their Retreat.

### No. 7. *General Letter, Secret Department.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xii, p. 29.

August 16, 1773.

Para. 3. We had directed Gen. Barker to receive Possession of the Provinces of Cora and Allahabad from Munneir ul Dowla, Naib of the King, who had expressed his desire to put these Districts under our Protection as the King, his Master, when defeated last year by the Mahrattas had been compelled whilst a Prisoner in their Hands to grant Sunnuds for the Surrender thereof to them, but as the indispensable Occupations of the General called him to a Distance and engaged too much of his time to allow the Attention requisite to so material an Object, the nature of which demanded the immediate Superintendence of a Person well skilled in the Business of the Revenues, We thought it essentially expedient, as well for preserving the Company's Influence and Participation in the Affairs of those Provinces as for establishing a Right to the future Disposal of them in the most advantageous manner, whenever it might become a Subject of Negotiation, to depute a Member of our Board to receive Charge of the Provinces of Cora and Allahabad from the General, and Mr. Lawrell was accordingly invested with the execution of this Trust and Instructions given him . . . that although we took Possession

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

of the Country as Allies of the King yet he was not to deliver it over to any Power whatever, not even to the King himself, without our express orders, for we judged that surrendering it to him in his present helpless State would be in fact giving it up to the Marattas.

Para. 4. The Vizier Suja ul Dowla about this Time in his Letters expressed a great desire to have an Interview with the Governor, and as that Circumstance concurred with our Wishes for having many Points of the greatest Consequence adjusted, which could not well be effected without a personal Conference, we acquiesced in opinion with the Select Committee, whose proceedings on this Subject were laid before us, that such an Interview at this Period might be attended with very beneficial Consequences to the Company's affairs.

Para. 6. Mr. Hastings left us on the 25. June for Banaras (i. e. Benares).

## No. 8. *The treaty of Benares.*

[Letter of Hastings to Boulton, Chairman of the Court of Directors.]

British Museum Add. MS. 29127, p. 103.

October 14, 1773.

. . . The Districts of Corah and Illahabad have been ceded to Soujah Dowla in consideration of an Acknowledgement to be paid to the Company of 50 lacks of rupees. . . . Soujah Dowla has engaged to pay 2,10,000 rupees per month for the expence of a Brigade when employed on his Service, this Sum, according to an Estimate made by the General, is fully equal to the real Charges; so that in future when our Troops are called to his Assistance, we shall be entirely relieved from the expences of a third part of our Army.

. . . The Zemindary of Benares which was held by Bulwant Sing has been confirmed by the Vizier to his Son Chyte Sing and his Posterity for ever. His Interest will make him a faithful and useful Ally on the borders of the Company's possessions.

Some Regulations have been made and some Privileges obtained which will serve to promote a free and mutual Intercourse of Trade between Bengal and those Countries. The annual Tribute to the King of 26 lacks has been professedly annulled, and it rests with the Court of Directors to determine whether anything is to be paid in future.

I hope my conduct will be honoured with your Approbation and that of the Gentlemen in the Direction. If I shall be so

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

unfortunate as to fail in this expectation, allow me, Sir, the Freedom to say that the Company ought not to condemn me and retain the Fruits of my Infidelities, they must persuade the Vizier to take back his 50 lacks for Corah and Illahabad that these may be given to the King. They must order Payment of his Arrears and the regular Discharge of his yearly demands. But from what Funds these Restitutions are to be made I know not, for Bengal will not supply a tenth part of its amount without a Tax on the Investment here or on the Dividend at home.

### No. 9. *General Letter, Select Committee.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xii, p. 211.

December 31, 1773.

Para. 4. We must beg leave to repeat our earnest desire that you will be pleased to furnish us with your explicit commands for our conduct with respect to the countries situate beyond the limits of these Provinces and those of your ally; whether our future relations are to be invariably circumscribed by those bounds, or in what cases you will approve and authorize our passing beyond them. You are well acquainted with the state of the neighbouring powers. Of these the Mahrattas only are formidable to your possessions. The rest are weak and (the Vizier only excepted) every way inconsiderable; nor should we regard the Mahrattas themselves in a light of much more importance, were the force and connexion of your 3 presidencies united under one active control, which we do not hesitate to foretell will, whenever such a plan shall take place render you the sovran arbiters of Indostan.

While the present system continues we certainly labour under great disadvantages with respect to the Mahrattas, since in every contest with them, they being necessarily the aggressors and we acting only in defensive, it can never be in our power to hurt them effectually nor even to act against them longer than they choose to stand in our way; but they on the contrary have it continually in their option to assail us at home, and by the immediate effect of their ravages, or by their alarms, disturb the peace of our country and affect our revenues, although we are sufficiently able to defeat the most strenuous efforts which they may at any time make against us.

Para. 5. Having thus exposed the state of your political interests it might be deemed presumptuous to anticipate the orders which you may be pleased to prescribe for our future guidance in support of them. We confess that we should

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

enter on such a subject with great diffidence from fear that what we might offer as matter of mere speculation might be construed into the intention of regulating our conduct accordingly; nevertheless we venture to offer for your consideration the measures which occur as resulting from this situation of things. These may be reduced to the 3 following propositions:—

1st. To unite the powers of the 3 presidencies into one manageable system, an object which we ardently wish to see accomplished.

2nd. To strengthen the Vizier by adding the territories of the Rohillas within the Ganges to his present dominions.

3rd. To raise up a new power in the person of the King, which might either be employed in conjunction with the Vizier in opposing the Mahrattas or, should there ever be occasion for it, to serve as counterpoise to the Vizier. It would always be easy for us to hold the scale between them.

Para. 6. For the 1st of these propositions the advantages are so great and so obvious that any argument in support of it would be superfluous. The 2nd we should much incline to adopt for reasons which you will find largely discussed in our proceedings in this department of 19th & 20th ult.

The 3rd, however beneficial the issue of it might prove, is liable to so many uncertain events in the accomplishment of it; would carry our arms to so great and indefinite a distance, and would involve us in so heavy an expense until we could extract from it the means of reimbursements, that we barely offer it to your notice but do not recommend it.

[The following four documents relate to the reorganization of the Nawab's Court and the deposition and trial of the Ministers.]

## No. 10. *President's Minute.*

*I. O. Records*, Committee of Circuit, Range 69, vol. xvii.

July 11, 1772.

. . . it was the intention of the Court of Directors to make an entire Reformation in the Government of these Provinces and to begin with the Abolition of that Authority which has been established in it during the course of the last seven years. Indeed if this had not been expressed it must necessarily have been implied in their commands, since it was not to be expected that a new Plan would effectually take place while the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Influence of the former subsisted . . . in a word every branch of the Administration centred in Mohamed Reza Cawn.

It is true that his authority was much diminished in the Collections by the Institution of the Supervisors, but he still retained an Influence in most Parts of the Province and in some his secret power was even superior to that of the Supervisors.

This office of Naib Subah according to its original constitution comprehends the superintending of the Nabob's education, the management of his household, the regulation of his expenses, the representation of his person, the chief administration of Justice, the issuing of all orders and the direction of all measures which respect the government and police of the provinces, the conduct of all public negotiations and the execution of treaties, in a word every branch of the executive government. We do not mention the military command, that having been by treaty ceded to the Company, but even this great charge cannot be wholly alienated from the Naib Subah if there is one, since by virtue of his office it is his name which must authorise every act of compulsion with regard to the European Companies. By the exercise of such extensive powers united in the same person the rights and prerogatives of the ancient government will still be preserved, and the minds of the people instead of being familiarised to the authority of the Company will be taught to look forward to the time when the Nabob shall resume the sovereignty and state of his predecessors from which his present youth excludes him.

We are not informed what line our superiors mean to pursue on the conclusion of the Nabob's minority. We can plainly see that whatever faith may be due to treaties subsisting on grounds of very controvertible authority, a divided government cannot last, but must be productive of continual contest and end at length in a scene of bloodshed like that which we have once already experienced. For these reasons it is our duty to suppose a total change of government by degrees taking place, which shall substitute the real power which protects this country, in the place of that which claims the possession of it by a right it is unable to assert or support, and to provide for the gradual completion of it by such means as can be regularly and justifiably exerted. The Nabob's minority incontestably affords such means; since whatever share of authority we should leave in his hands, whatever portion of the public revenue we should allow for his use, would prove of no benefit to him. The former would be

usurped to gratify the purposes of private ambition, and employed perhaps to his destruction: the latter would be dissipated by the minions of his court. In whose hands can they both rest with such propriety as in those to which they naturally belong: and if at the expiration of the term which shall be fixed to his minority it shall then be resolved to resign to him the authority which his rank and station may claim such a cession will have so much the more merit as the temptation and means of withholding it are the greater. Whatever therefore may be the future determination, it is our duty to take such measures as shall assure to our superiors the option of acting according to their own ideas of Justice and propriety, that is to retain openly in their own hands the whole conduct of the government for the present to accustom the people to the soveranty of the British nation, to divide the office of the Nizamut and to suffer no person to share in the management of the Nabob's domestic affairs who from birth, rank, personal consideration or from actual trust may have it in his power to assist his master with the means or even to inspire him with the hopes of future independence.

## No. 11. *The Nawab's Household.*

**British Museum Add. MS. 29105, p. 12; *Bengal Letters*, vol. xi, p. 131; General Letter, Secret Department.**

November 10, 1772.

Para. 11. The reduction of the Nabob's stipend and the new arrangement of his household in consequence was a measure equally difficult and invidious in execution, but besides being indispensable from your orders, our sense of its wisdom and propriety made it be undertaken without delay or regret. To bring the whole expenses of the Nizamut within the pale of 16 lacks it was necessary to begin with reforming the useless servants of the court and retrenching the idle parade of elephants, menageries, etc. which loaded the Civil List. This cost little regret in performing, but the President, who took upon him the chief share in this business, acknowledges he suffered considerably in his feelings when he came to touch upon the Pension List. Some hundreds of persons of the ancient nobility of the Country, excluded under our government from almost all employments civil or military, had ever since the revolution depended on the bounty of the Nabob and near 10 lacks were bestowed that way. It is not that the distribution was always made with judgement and impartiality,

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

and much room was left for a reform, but when the question was to cut off the greatest part, it could not fail to be accompanied with circumstances of real distress. The President declares that even with some of the highest rank he could not avoid discovering under all the pride of eastern manners, the manifest marks of penury and want. There was however no room left for hesitation. To confine the Nabob's expenses within the limited sum it was necessary that pensions should be set aside. It was done and every regard was had to equity and the pretensions of individuals in settling those that were allowed to remain.

Para. 12. The dependents of the late Naib Subah were without exception cut off the list and the remainder of the reduction chiefly confined to those who were of less pretensions or more independence of fortune than the old pensioners.

Para. 13. ... (the Rajah Goordass) conducts himself in his new Ministry both to our satisfaction and to that of the Munny Begum, who is at the head of the Nabob's house.

Para. 14. ... We have everything to expect from her management in confirming the plans of your administration and forwarding the Company's views. She displays great prudence in her conduct and carries herself with a dignity becoming the post she holds.

We can say little of the Nabob himself: he seems to betray a mind more neglected than really deficient at bottom. How far the care of the Munny Begum may be able to bring him back to himself must be seen in future. In the meantime the President with her approbation has driven from his presence some of the chief minions of his favour and instruments of his irregular pleasures.

Para. 18. The Enquiry into the Conduct of the Nabob Mohamed Reza Cawn and of Rajah Shitabroy have necessarily been suspended during the absence of the President on the more important and interesting Business of the Settlements and other Objects with which the Committee of Circuit were charged. In the meantime we have sought for Information by every justifiable method. ... We entertain no doubts of fixing on the former sufficient facts to justify your dismission and censure of him, but our duty obliges us to intimate our doubts of being able to ascertain some of the Charges against him, in particular that of his dealings in the time of the Famine and of his Peculation in the management of the Nabob's Revenue. The first must by the nature of it be vague and unprecise, and even the Transactions themselves, if proved, are susceptible of a specious colouring, which it may be difficult to

remove, and the last is so involved in the Intricacies of Voluminous Household accounts obscured by the Bengal Character and Language that they promise very little success in the unravelling them.

No. 12. *The Inquiry into the conduct of Mohamed Reza Khan.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xii, p. 33; General Letter, Secret Department.

August 16, 1773.

Para. 12. We foresaw that it would be a very tedious and troublesome business. We have good reason to continue confirmed in this opinion, for notwithstanding we have dedicated to it all the time that we could possibly spare from the other indispensable duties of your Government we have only yet been able to go through the 1st Article of Impeachment, viz. the charge of his monopolizing the grain during the famine. We have examined a number of evidences in support of this charge, but we must acknowledge that they do not establish any clear or conclusive proof of the Naib's guilt; on the contrary, the Belief which prevailed in the Country of his being concerned in that trade seems in great degree to have taken its rise from the notions of the People, who not having access to better intelligence blended and mistook the duties of Mohammed Reza Cawn's public Station in the measures which he pursued for the relief of the city during the height of the famine for the exertion of sordid views to gratify and promote his private interest. By the time the examination in the 1st charge was finished Mohamed Reza Cawn had undergone a 14 months' close confinement, which led us to consider whether it was necessary he should continue longer in that state: upon maturely weighing every circumstance the Board were unanimously of opinion that opportunity had been afforded for all persons desirous of accusing him or of obtaining redress of grievances suffered at his hands to have appeared to give their testimony or to make their application, and as to destroy his influence in the country and to encourage all persons to stand forth and prefer their accusations against him unawed by any apprehensions from the effects of his power or of his resentment was one of the chief purposes intended by placing guards on his person, We thought that to continue them longer became unnecessary and might appear to the world an act of wanton severity, especially as the article of the Impeachment related solely to matters of accounts for investigating which the Informations already received and the public



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

records of the Khalsa and Nizamut were the only materials wanted. It was therefore agreed to recommend to the President to withdraw the guards, which concurring entirely with his own sentiments he gave orders accordingly, but it was at the same time resolved that he should not be permitted to depart Calcutta untill the enquiry shall have been finished.

Para. 13. Mohamed Reza Cawn has delivered a Defence to this Article [i. e. Art. 1 of the Impeachment] avowing his Innocence of the Charge, pointing out the Measures which public Duty obliged him to take for the Relief of the Country at that melancholy Conjuncture and detecting a Variety of Falsehoods and Contradictions in the Depositions of the Evidences.

Para. 14. The second Article of Impeachment is the Ballance which is stated against him during the 2 years that he collected the Dacca Revenues under the Nabob Mir Jaffier. This Ballance is grounded upon a Tahud or Contract and a Kistbundee which appears under Mohamed Reza Cawn's Seal. In reply to the Demand which it establishes Mohamed Reza Cawn sets forth that these Deeds were extorted from him by Violence at a Time when through the Machinations of Nundoocomar he was under Confinement and considered his Life to be in Danger and that they were afterwards invalidated or suspended by writings which he produces under the Sign Manual of the Nabob Mir Jaffier. Nundoocomar on the other hand continues to assert that the Ballance established by this Kistbundee is justly due and recoverable from Mohamed Reza Cawn. Thus circumstanced, without the assistance of further Lights or Proofs, the only Clue we have left to lead to the Investigation of the Truth, and upon which to build a Judgment, is to obtain if possible an Account of the actual Collections made in the Province of Dacca for these Years. We have with this View resolved that our President shall call upon Nundoocomar for every Paper and Proof that he can produce in support of this Charge and that these shall be given in trust to Mr. Barwell, the Chief of Dacca, with full powers and Instructions to trace and ascertain, either by the Lights which they may afford or by any other means in his power, such as the acquiring of the Mofussil Papers or obtaining Information from the ancient Muttaseddies of the District, an exact Account of the real Collections for the two Years which Mohamed Reza Cawn was the Naib of Dacca.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

No. 13. *President's Letter to the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xii, p. 416.

March 24, 1774.

I will speak first of that Charge which was more particularly the Object of your Attention and our Enquiry, I mean the Monopoly of Grain.

You will be pleased to recollect that the Charge was general, without any Specificates of Time, Places, or Persons. I had neither Witnesses nor Vouchers, nor Materials of any sort to begin with. For these I relied chiefly on the Abilities, Observation, and active Malignity of Mahraja Nundcomar, but not resting wholly on his Aid I took such other Precautions as were most likely to produce Informations against Mohamed Reza Cawn, if his Conduct had actually merited that Return from the People of this Country. In concurrence with the Committee of Circuit at Cossimbazar and with the Council here, I published Advertisements inviting all Persons to give Information against such as had contributed to the Distresses of the Country in the Time of the Famine by the Monopoly of Grain or any other unfair Practices on the Wants and Necessities of the People. I allowed all who had anything to offer on these subjects to have Access to me; and although I never had much time to spare, I patiently bestowed many Hours and even Days of it in listening to the multiplied but indefinite suggestions of Nundcomar. . . .

In the course of the Enquiry I proceeded with the most rigid Impartiality. . . . I informed the Rajah Huzoorymull of the Reference which you had been pleased to direct me to make to him for the Facts on which his Information was grounded. He came several Times to me with the Express Purpose, and brought with him an old and respectable Merchant of this City since deceased . . . to aid him in his Informations. But after much timid Hesitation, mutual Reference, and Procrastination, they both at length declined it, nor could I ever obtain the smallest Intelligence from either. . . . Either the fear of the Consequences affecting his Character restrained him [i. e. Huzoorymull] from avowing what he knew, or (which I think more likely) he was misled by the Clamors of the People in the Information which he originally gave to Mr. Gregory.

With respect to the accounts of the Nizamut . . . All the accounts on these Heads which I have ever received from Rajah Nundcomar stand upon record and they are such as



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

appear more calculated to acquit Mohamed Reza Cawn than establish any proofs against him.

I am at a Loss to discover the Secret spring which governs the mysterious conduct of this Man (i. e. Nundcomar), as I am certain he is impelled by nothing less than a desire to favor Mohamed Reza Cawn. It might suit well with his private Views to procrastinate the issue of the Enquiry, although it would be little consistent with the Credit or Justice of your Administration to prolong it to a further period, two Years having been already consumed in bringing it to a Close on our Proceedings. Many attempts indeed were made by Nundcomar, both in the course of this Affair, and in the Examination of Mahraja Shitabroy, to obtain a formal commission for making a personal and local Inquisition into the Accounts of the Collections depending on both; but of this I disapproved, knowing that such a Power might be converted and believing that in his hands it would be converted to purposes as detrimental to the Revenues as oppressive to the People. It was proposed to the Board and by them peremptorily refused.

Notwithstanding the consciousness which I possess of my own Integrity and the Certainty that my Conduct throughout this ungrateful Business will on the most rigid Scrutiny do me credit, yet I am not without my Fears. I am aware of the violent Prejudices which were taken up at once against Mohamed Reza Cawn by all Ranks of People both here and at Home. I am also aware that in England, where the very Name of Enquiry into the management of past Affairs in India flatters the passion of the Times, and raises Expectations of great and important Detections, the Result may balk those Expectations and turn the Torrent of public Clamor another Way. In many of the private Letters which I received from my Friends in England, I was warned to act with the greatest Caution in this Enquiry, as the Confirmation of my Credit with the Public and, forgive me for adding, with Yr. Honble Court depended upon it. . . .

I can only say that I have never quitted this Prosecution but for Affairs of greater Moment; and though I ever bear the most respectful Deference for your Commands and have never suffered my Zeal to slacken in their Execution, yet I must candidly own that I never gave up a portion of my Time to this Business without feeling a painful Regret that so much of it was lost to the care of your real Business.

I must declare that I have another Motive for my Fears, the dark and deceitful character of Nundcomar, whose gratitude no Kindness can bind, nor even his own Interest disengage

him from the crooked Politics which have been the Study and Practice of his whole Life. Of this I have had many very extraordinary Proofs.

Before my Departure from Fort St. George, when my Appointment to this Presidency was known, a Messenger expressly deputed from Munny Begum came to me there with letters from her, entreating my Protection in the most earnest Terms both for her House and for the People of Bengal against the Tyranny of Mohamed Reza Cawn, and referring me for further Information to Mahraja Nundcomar, from whom I received similar addresses on the same subject (and by the same Hand).[1] The Begum has since solemnly disowned her having ever written such Letters, or authorized such a Commission. . . .

A very short Time after the Elevation of his Son to the high Office which he now possesses as Dewan to the Nabob, Nundcomar sent Drafts of Letters to the Begum, which he recommended her to write to me, enumerating the many Encroachments which had been made by the English Government on the Rights of the Nizamut, and reclaiming them for the Behalf of the Nabob. Copies of these Drafts, communicated to me by the Resident Mr. Middleton and by other Channels, are actually in my Possession. . . .

My Experience of his Character has never altered my Behaviour to him, but in such Instances only, and such have occurred as required it for the publick Tranquillity. I have supported the Authority of Rajah Goordass even in Opposition to the Begum, because it was consistent with the Credit and Dignity of your Administration that the System which it had been thought proper on well-considered Grounds to appoint should be steadily supported.

I have also in many little Instances by my Countenance assisted the personal Influence of Mahraja Nundcomar, and I have endeavoured to turn both his good and bad qualities to account for the Advantage of the Hon. Company, in such Occasions as could admit of the Application of either. But I must say that I have been disappointed in all my past Expectations from him, and do not promise myself much Benefit from his Abilities in Time to come, as the Scene in which he has the fairest Opportunities of displaying them is now closed.

Whatever your Resolution may be concerning the future Fate of Mohamed Reza Cawn, it is my duty, although I believe it unnecessary, to represent that whatever reparation you may think due for his past sufferings, the Restoration of any Part

[1] These five words are interpolated in W. H.'s handwriting.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

of the Power which he before possessed will inevitably tend to the Injury of the Company's Affairs, and the Diminution of your Influence and Authority.

There can be but one Government and one power in this Province. Even the Pretensions of the Nabob may prove a Source of great Embarrassment when he is of Age to claim his release from the present State of Pupillage which prevents his asserting them.

I have the Honour to be, Gentlemen,
your most obedient and most faithful Servant,
WARREN HASTINGS.

## No. 14. *Trial and Fate of Raja Shitab Roy.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xii, p. 32 ; General Letter, Secret Department.

[Though of an earlier date than the last document, these extracts are printed later because they deal with a different branch of the Inquiries.]

August 16, 1773.

Para. 9. Since the despatch of the *Hector* we have concluded the Enquiry into the Conduct of Mohamed Shitab Roy and it has terminated in his acquittal, no proof having been produced against him either of Embezzlement or Mismanagement during the period of his Administration.

Upon this issue of his Enquiry, being satisfied of his great abilities and Experience in the business of the Revenue and the service of such a person being absolutely necessary in Bahar, we appointed him to act as Roy Royan for that Province, and the Nabob at our recommendation has continued him his Naib for the superintendence of the Criminal branch of the administration of Justice and interposition in disputes with foreign nations.

Para. 11. We have granted Shitab Roy an allowance of 50,000 r. for his Offices of Naib to the Soubah and Roy Royan of Bahar. This is only a half of his former salary, but on the principle of adopting a strict economy in every branch of public expence we have acquainted him that we expect he should consider this allowance not only adequate to his station but also as a compensation for the loss sustained by being deprived of his Jaghire of the Pachutra duties.[1]

[1] i. e. customs or tolls granted to farm like land-revenues.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

*Revenue Letter.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xii, p. 160.

November 10, 1773.

Para. 28. It is with regret that we have to advise you of the death of Mohamed Shitab Roy, which happened so soon after his return to Patna as to preclude him from enjoying the reparation we had deemed him entitled to for the apparent disgrace he had suffered and the Company from receiving any further benefit from his services.

Para. 29. Although Mohamed can no longer benefit by our good opinion of him, yet we cannot omit to express our thorough conviction that he ever served the Company with a fidelity, integrity and ability which they can hardly expect to experience in any future Officer of Government whom they may chuse from the same class of people.

[These two documents (15 and 16) give an insight into Hastings's relations with his Council, the letter to Mr. Sulivan, Deputy Chairman of Court of Directors, explaining the need for new regulations.]

No. 15. *Regulations proposed for Standing Orders of Council.*

*Bengal Public Consultations*, Range 2, vol. i, p. 789.

October 26, 1772.

1. When a question is before the Board any Member may propose the previous question or any alteration or amendment of it.

2. Every question shall be put by the President and shall be framed in such words as shall admit of a simple Affirmative or Negative in reply.

3. Every Member shall reply to the question by a simple Affirmative or Negative. He shall have a right afterwards to state his Reasons for his opinion in a Separate Minute.

4. No paper shall be inserted in the Proceedings unless by order of the Board except Minutes by individual Members signed by themselves.

5. No Member but the President shall dictate Minutes to the Secretary at the Council Board, and he only such as are to stand as Minutes of the Board.

6. The Secretary shall take down the substance of every Member's opinion by short notes in his Minute book if required, but it shall be at the option of any Member to send in a minute of his own writing after Council to be substituted in its Room.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

7. Only one Minute shall be received from any one Member on any one Subject of Debate. But the majority shall be entitled to one reply as the majority of the Board, and if in this reply any new matter be introduced which shall not have passed or be recollected to have passed in the course of the Debate, in that case the Minority shall have the Priviledge of a Rejoinder upon that only.

November 16, 1772. [The above Regulations were ordered to stand as rules.]

## No. 16. *Letter to Mr. Sulivan.*

British Museum Add. MS. 29127.

November 11, 1772.

. . . the affairs of this Settlement require great reformation, and I have no power to effect it.

By great labour and a particular attention to the most important departments and concerns of the service, I maintain an influence in this Administration; to which also the good disposition of most of the members now associated with me, and the opinion that the Governor is in something, though nobody can tell in what, superior to the other members, have a little contributed.

In truth I am no more than a mere member of the Board, with the only distinct power of a casting vote when the members are equal (a privilege which I never perhaps shall make use of) and with no other pre-eminence besides that of a greater responsibility. The powers which you have given me to try, condemn and dismiss such of the Council as have fallen under your censure for trading in the articles you have proscribed, tend in the exercise of them to destroy the few which I possess, as they influence every man's resentment and arm every man's hand against me, who can keep himself without the narrow circle of my jurisdiction. Indeed they are safe for some time, for I have not time to enter upon the enquiries. It is more than I can manage to work through the labor of the day. I cannot look back, and I speak with confidence when I declare that I have never suffered my private concerns nor amusement nor pleasure, nor the duties of society, to draw me a day from those of my station, nor even an hour which I did not repay from the time which ought to have been allotted to rest. Do not therefore blame me, nor suffer me to be blamed for what I have not done, but give me credit for the quantity and importance of what has been done.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

When I have said that I have not spent my time idly, I do not mean to acquit myself of having given some part of it to unprofitable labors. It has been my own care to select such matters as most claimed my attention and to apply myself principally to them. But there is a gentleman of our Council who seems to think that every subject that comes before the Board or that he can intrude upon it ought to go through a long discussion. I mean Mr. Barwell. He has talents for opposition and his minutes appear plentifully scattered upon our consultations. He has been encouraged indeed to practise this by a compliment which the Court of Directors were pleased to pay him in a late General Letter for having *dissented* from the Board respecting the Navy donation, from which he did not dissent. I do not believe he set out with any personal objections to me. I have reason to believe the contrary. But such were the effects of his altercations, doubts, dissents, replies and rejoinders on points of the most trivial nature, in obstructing the current business, and souring the temper of our debates, that I have been under the necessity of taking public notice of it. . . . [*vide* a Minute in Consultations]. I should not have thought it necessary to have said so much or anything about him, but that I understand he has made it a practice to give his opinions of men and manners to his correspondents in England, and that he has had many scribes employed for some days past. I have judged it necessary therefore to give you this caution. I myself detest clandestine correspondence, but I fear the effects of it, having had some instances of their influence since I have been in India, which give me cause to fear them.

Mr. Barwell has replied to the minute which I have above referred to with much temper and in a manner which seems to promise the cessation of hostilities on his part. Whether he means to resume them after the despatch of the *Lapwing*, or really wishes to be at peace, I know not. I am determined not to resume the warfare. It is not possible to conduct your affairs and a literary war with those who ought to help me bear the load of your service. . . . Your letter brings me back again to the subject of the extraordinary powers delegated to me. They are indeed a heavy burden on my shoulders. You say 'I must exercise them'. I cannot exercise them. I have daily resolved for these 6 weeks past to begin with Lushington and am not without materials. But it has been impossible. I could not find a vacant hour into which I could thrust a business of this kind and it would require a week. The enquiry into the ready-money purchases of piece goods I

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

referred (through necessity) to a Committee before I went up country. It has never met. Now hear what I have to do, and blame me if you can for neglect and disobedience.

1. Enquiry just mentioned into facts of 3 years' standing.
2. An enquiry into the conduct of the Board of Trade.
3. An enquiry into the conduct of Mr. Lushington during the famine and
4. that of the dealers in grain.
5. An enquiry into the conduct of Mohamed Reza Cawn.
6. " " " old Shitab Roy.

And Accounts and papers demanded which have been regularly transmitted or which are not in being; and endless depositions to be taken with threats of severe resentments if we fail in any of these injunctions.

These are the duties which have been prescribed by the Court of Directors and which respect past transactions. They may wait and the Company suffer no injury by the delay. The following arise out of the immediate necessities of the service and cannot wait :—

1. The official inspection and regulation of the different expences of this Government—a work begun 6 months ago but suspended.
2. The establishment of the new Courts of Justice in the districts;
3. of the 2 Superior Courts at the Presidency.
4. The final adjustment and retrenchment of the Nabob's expence, a work which cost me many hours' laborious employment at the City and is yet incomplete.
5. The Settlement of the remainder of the Province, of which the Board will have no other trouble than to confirm or amend the plans formed by the gentlemen who are still on the Committee.
6. The final conclusion of the Settlement of Beerboom and Bissenpoor, Pacheat, Jessore, Hugli, Midnapore and the Calcutta Pergunnahs (hitherto left to be dealt with by members of Council at Calcutta).
7. Military and political operations with the Vizier to regulate.
8. The business of the Investment to settle, if possible on the plans directed in your letters of last year.
9. The new office of the Khalsa is already well formed and the business goes on in it better than I could have expected in its infancy, but it requires a daily attention.

Besides these, which are all I can now recollect, the daily and current business is of an endless variety. This will not

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

wait. Stewart has possession of his place as Secretary to the Board and is of great relief to me. We have formed a new Council and a new Secretary for the department of Revenue which are also a relief to him. Mr. Higginson is the Secretary of this department, and this gentleman was one of the Collectors, afterwards one of the Moorshedabad Council. He is high in the service and has abilities and pretensions to the most lucrative appointments. This was offered to him and accepted with a cheerfulness which does him great credit. He has great merit in the diligence with which he has acquitted himself in it.

By throwing the business into the proper channels, and getting able hands to conduct it, I hope by degrees to free myself from the share which falls too heavily upon me of the detail, and to have nothing to do but to inspect, superintend, and direct. I hope to begin next week with Shitab Roy and soon after with Mohamed Reza Cawn. The former I fancy will soon be acquitted, the latter not so easily, for I believe him to have been very culpable, and apprehend that fresh charges will appear against him.

You will meet with a great deal of dry discussion in our Revenue letter.[1] But it is founded on real facts, and will be worth your attention as they are the groundwork of all we have done since in the Revenue. One good quality I hope you will discover both in our advices concerning the Revenue and in the future accounts of it, viz. that they will be capable of being easily understood. It shall be my first care to free both from the obscurity in which they have been hitherto enveloped, and to make the latter as simple as the other accounts of the Presidency.

[Documents 17 to 20 relate to the reform of the Civil Establishment.]

## No. 17. *The Board of Inspection.*

*Bengal Public Consultations*, Range 1, vol. 51, p. 132.

April 24, 1772.

Resolved that the Board do assemble every Evening at 6 o'clock for this purpose (to enter upon an Inspection of the different Offices at the Presidency with a view to establish effectual Regulations for the future conduct of them, and especially to retrench any superfluous Article of the Expences which appear to be greatly increased), and that the Heads of the several Offices be directed immediately to prepare and

[1] *Vide Calcutta Committee of Revenue Consultations*, 2, Range 67, vol. 55, pp. 5–88.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

send in to the Secretary Estimates of their Disbursements, as well those that are established, as such as are contingent and fluctuating framed upon a Medium of what they generally amount to, and these Estimates to be accompanied with the three preceding Months' accounts and Calculates of the monthly Average Demand of Articles expended in the offices of the several Storekeepers and Buxey etc.

No. 18. *Board of Inspection (continued).*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xi, p. 61; General Letter.

November 10, 1772.

Para. 6. In conformity to our Resolution of 24th April last we formed ourselves into a Board of Inspection and continued our Meetings with little Interruption till the Departure of the President and Committee of Circuit. We proceeded to inspect the publick Offices, regulate them, reduce their Expenses, and had already marked out the Ground of considerable saving to the Company.

Our Labours in so necessary a work shall be again renewed, and we hope to be able this Season to transmit you an accurate Account of their Success.

No. 19. *Appointment of Mr. Barwell to be Chief of Dacca and Mr. Lane to be Chief of Patna.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xii, p. 20; General Letter, Public Department.

August 16, 1773.

Para. 16. Conformably to your Commands of the 24th November, Mr. Barwell was appointed to the Chiefship of Dacca. . . .

Para. 17. . . . Mr. Lane was at the same time appointed to the Chiefship of Patna. It next became a serious Object of our Consideration, what Mode could be adopted at the Subordinates under the Direction of these Gentlemen to retrench the expenses thereof as much as possible; nothing appeared to us better calculated to effect this End than placing the Business of the Factories as well as the Revenue under them as Residents with Assistants instead of a Council, and we accordingly carried this Plan into Execution by abolishing the Councils at the two former places[1] and at Cossimbuzar.

Para. 18. The Resident will receive equal Aid in the Execution of the Business from the Gentlemen in their Capacity of Assistants as he would have done had they been Members of

[1] i.e. Dacca and Patna.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

a Council. The Responsibility will now rest on him in the Provision of the Investment as it does in the Collection of the Revenue, instead of its being lodged in a Collective Body where it can neither with Precision be defined nor Blame fixed in case of Failure in Quantity or Defects in Quality.

Para. 19. (Board of Inspection retrenching both the charges etc. of the Offices at the Presidency and all the Subordinate Factories.)

Para. 22. We informed you that the Duties due by the Society of Trade A. had been compleatly paid up, and that of those due from the Society B. there remained a Ballance of Current Rupees 6,66, 920,15, 9. This Ballance has been since reduced. . . . We have Reason to expect farther Payments soon, and that the whole will be liquidated before the final Departure of the Ships of this Season.

Para. 23. For investigating the Proceedings of this Society we have appointed a Committee consisting of a Member of Council and four Junior Servants, and they are accordingly prosecuting their Enquiries in Conformity to your Orders of the 25th of March 1772.

## No. 20. *Board of Inspection, Auditor, &c.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xii, p. 104; General Letter, Public Department.

November 10, 1773.

Para. 49. By the Proceedings of the Board of Inspection transmitted on this Packet, you will perceive the progress we have made in the retrenchment of our Civil expenses. We were too sensible of the necessity of this reform to relax in our endeavours to effect this necessary work; the Regulation of all the Subordinates is completed, by which a very great saving has been made. To instance at Patna what was effected during the President's stay there on his way to Benares, it will not be less than 50,000 rupees a year. We have also passed through the different Offices at the Presidency excepting those of the Military Storekeeper and Master Attendant, which though not completed have occupied a great share of our time and labor and we hope will be also finished by the departure of our latter ships.

Para. 50. As we have found by repeated experience of many years past that the many useful regulations which have from time to time been formed have proved of no effect from want of some immediate authority to enforce an obedience to them. We have established the Office of Auditor in this department to inspect and pass the different accounts conformably to the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

arrangements, which Office is now held in weekly succession by the different Members of our Administration; and as the establishments shall be finally completed in the several Offices and at the Subordinates the Auditor will be enabled easily to form his weekly report and will always prevent deviation from these rules.

No. 21. *Reform of the Military Establishment. Pargana Battalions abolished.*

*Extract from letter of Gen. Barker, dated January 27, 1772.*

*Bengal Public Consultations*, Range 1, vol. 51, Feb. 17, 1772.

. . . ever since the Establishment of the Pergunnah Sepoys I have seen a Confusion entering into the Army which will require your serious Attention to digest and regulate. If anything tends to weaken the Civil Authority in this Government it is this motley System, this Blending of the Civil and Military Authority together in the Pergunnah Service. The Civil has the Supreme Authority; may it ever remain so. But when it descends into the Minutia, the executive part of the Military Department and your Civil Servants become Military Men, so much does it lose of its Supremacy, by giving those Advantages, where disputed Authority becomes in question, and you can scarcely clear it from your Civil power.

[This is reproduced as it stands in the Records and is somewhat obscure. For abolition of Pargana Battalions *vide* p. 217, also *Bengal Secret Consultations*, Range A. 25, p. 28.]

No. 22. *Hastings's Letter to Colebrooke, Chairman of Directors.*

British Museum Add. MS. 29127.

April 20, 1772.

. . . This Government like that of St. George is embarrassed and disturbed by internal dissensions. The present subject is a claim of a greater independency in the Military than is thought consistent with the authority of Government. This pretension has in some instances been carried to the length of a control over the Civil Government. It is impossible that you should have time to read a Bengal Court Martial. Those on Capt. Mackenzie and Mr. Feltham . . . contain a striking portrait of the manners of the time and the nature of your present system. If possible I beseech you to read it as well as the letter of Major Morgan, the President of that Council.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

He has been dismissed for disrespect to the Board and an avowal of principles which tend to subvert the true powers of Government. I do not think the Board wholly exempt from blame. An excess of violence on one side scarce ever fails to cause a bias on the other. Let me add that it is impossible for this Government not to commit error. I cannot find words to convey to you an idea of its embarrassments nor of the multiplicity of business which continually waits for its decisions. It has not time for caution and slow deliberation. Your affairs will run headlong to ruin if your servants are made responsible for every stumble which in the hurry of your affairs they may make against the forms of law. I assure myself you will weigh the consequences of the decision which the Court of Directors shall pass on these disputes. The authority and credit of your Government depends essentially upon it. Were a clear and precise line drawn between the two powers and were it declared by the authority of our superiors how far the delegated authority of Government shall extend these contests would cease. I may seem to dwell too much on a point of so trivial an appearance, but, believe me, Sir, there is great danger in the habit of contention between the Civil and Military powers. It may grow into an irreconcilable hatred and animosity unless timely checked by the hand of authority. If such a temper should ever take root and those who compose the strength of your state find that they may exercise it without control and as they please with impunity I leave you to judge what will follow. Your military establishment is the spring of government. The civil power forms its wheels, which restrain the force of the former and enable it to give an equal and permanent motion to the whole machine. If you weaken or loosen the wheels the force of the spring will prevail irresistibly for a few moments and then the machine will stop for ever, for I know not the artificer that can set it going again.

## No. 23. *Dacoits.*

*Calcutta Committee of Revenue Consultations*, Range 67, vol. 55, p. 210.

November 17, 1772.

Rungpore, November 4, 1772.

The Decoits are now assembling in such numerous bodies committing robberies and murders throughout the Rungpore districts that I much fear the revenues will fall short and be greatly impeded unless you will be pleased to augment the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

number of sepoys stationed here. For they send daily to villages demanding sums of money of them or threatening their destruction if they refuse, nor dare they send in their collections from the distant parts. . . . A Sirdar of pikes belonging to one of the Zemindars undertook to bring in one Mogul, a noted decoit; the Sirdar and his nephew were found in a Haut called Cossigunge by Mogul and his party, which he had raised to the number of a hundred; Mogul cut them to pieces with his own hands in open day and in the face of a number of people, whom he threatened with death if they dared to stir. . . .

There are hourly complaints coming in against the decoits. And the very prison itself in the middle of the town of Rungpore has been attempted to be broke, but the people though discovered at the time have found means to get off.

CHARLES PURLING, Collector.

[Government authorize a reward of Rs. 1,000 for Mogul's capture; and advocate the employment of sepoys to restore order.]

*Bengal Revenue Consultations*, 8, Range 49, vol. 45.

April 19, 1774.

The Board having thought proper to commit the superintendence of the Courts instituted for the trial of offences against the public Peace to my especial care. . . .

Although the most beneficial consequences may be expected from the establishment of these courts, from the regular process with which they are conducted, and the equal distribution of justice which is thus provided for in every part of this extensive and populous country, yet I cannot avoid expressing my apprehension that these benefits are reserved to a period of more established order than the present Administration has yet had time to effect and that the public tranquillity will not be secured without the exertion of other and extraordinary means. At this time I have repeated complaints from all parts of the province of the multitude of decoits who have infested it for some years past and have been guilty of the most daring and alarming excesses. . . . I know not whether the knowledge of these evils has been officially communicated to the Board. To me it has only come through the channels of private information, as I do not recollect to have heard the slightest intimation of them from the Zemindars, Farmers or other officers of the Revenue, which may appear extraordinary but that I am assured that the Zemindars themselves too

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

frequently afford them protection and that the ryots, who are the principal sufferers by these ravages, dare not complain, it being an established maxim with the decoits to punish with death every information given against them.

The remedies for this evil will be best discovered from the knowledge of the means which have contributed to produce it, these may be reduced to the following heads :

I. Abolition of the Fouzdari jurisdiction and of the Tannadaris dependent on it. This institution provided for the security of the public peace and provided the means of conveying regular intelligence of every disorder or casualty which happened in any part of the provinces. By its removal the confidence of the decoits has been increased, nor has any other means been substituted for giving intelligence to the Government of such events as relate to the peace of the country.

II. The resumption of the Chaukeraun Zemeen or lands allotted to the Tannadars and pykes for their services in guarding the villages and larger districts against robberies.

Many of the people thus deprived of their livelihood have themselves turned decoits, such of the monthly servants allowed by our late regulations as received their allotted pay are wholly employed for the farmers in the service of the collections, but the greater part I am assured have their wages wholly withheld from them, so that none of them are of any utility to the community. This may perhaps account for the silence of the farmers with respect to the disorders committed in their districts.

III. The farming system . . . useful as this is to the general welfare of the state, and of the people, it is one of the principal sources of the disorderly state of the Mofussil by the removal of that claim which the public by immemorial usage before possessed to the restitution of all damages and losses sustained by robbers, on the Zemindars of the country. These having no longer the same authority cannot be held accountable as they formerly were for the effects of it, although the right of government has never been formally renounced. The Farmers who stand in their places ought indeed to be made answerable for the disorders proceeding from their neglect, but whatever they were compelled to pay on this account would be brought into their balances at the end of the year, and would thus fall ultimately on the Government itself.

IV. I am sorry to enumerate among the causes of the increase of robbers the regularity and precision which has been introduced into our new Courts of Justice.

The dread which the common people entertain of the decoits



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

and the difficulty which even without such an impression must attend the conviction of an offender of this kind, however notorious, before a Mahommedan Court, which requires two possible evidences in every capital case, afford them an assurance of impunity in the prosecution of their crimes; since they generally carry on their designs in the night or under disguises. Among those who have been convicted of robbery I do not recollect an instance in the proceedings upon their trial in which their guilt has been proved by evidence, but by their own confession only; this has occurred in so many instances that I am not without a suspicion that it is often attained by improper means.

The Chiefs of these banditti are generally as well known to be such as if they were invested with a legal and public authority for the command which they exercise, yet it would be scarce possible to prove any direct fact against them on which they could be condemned, and I have heard the names of some who have been taken up and examined on the notoriety of their character, but have been acquitted and released for want of evidence against them . . . with such offenders the authorised practice of the former Government has ever been to ascertain the identity of the men, and to condemn them without waiting for further process to establish any specific charge against them. I know to what I expose myself by recommending a practice so repugnant to the equity and tenderness of our own constitution: but from a principle superior to every consideration which may affect myself, I venture to declare that unless this Government adopts the same summary mode of proceeding in such cases as I have described I see no probability of freeing this country from the worst of oppression, or restoring it to security and order. A rigid observance of the letter of the law is a blessing in a well regulated state, but in a Government loose as that of Bengal is, and must be for some years to come, an extraordinary and exemplary coercion must be applied to eradicate those evils which the law cannot reach.

I now proceed to describe the remedy to these disorders, as it is pointed out by the causes to which I have attributed them. I propose that a Fouzdar be appointed to the stations hereafter mentioned for the protection of the inhabitants, for the detection and apprehension of public robbers within their respective districts, and for transmitting constant intelligence of all matters relating to the peace of the country to the Presidency:

. . . that the Farmers, Zemindars and other officers of the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Collections be enjoined to afford them all possible assistance in the discharge of their duty, and to obey such orders as they may have occasion to issue for that purpose :

That the farmers do make over to them the land servants allowed for their respective districts, who shall be under the absolute command of the Fouzdar :

That the Chaukeraun Zemeen or lands allotted for the maintenance of the Tannadars and pykes, which have been resumed and included in the Jumma, may be again separated from it and applied to their original design.

I cannot better recommend this institution than by mentioning it as the universal practice of all the nations in India, and of the remotest antiquity. I am assured that the lands which have been resumed from this service yield little revenue to the Government, having been mostly deserted by their former proprietors :

That the jurisdiction of each Fouzdar be ascertained by proper limits ; that he be made responsible for the due maintenance of the peace within that space ; but that it may be lawful and enjoined him to send his officers, when occasion may require it, beyond those limits for the apprehending of offenders, and that they be all strictly enjoined to co-operate and assist each other for that effect :

That an officer be established under the control and authority of the President for receiving and registering all reports from the Fouzdars, and issuing orders to them :

That such of the Zemindars or farmers as shall be convicted of having neglected to assist the Fouzdars in the execution of their trust shall be made responsible for any loss sustained by such misconduct or otherwise fined according to the nature of the offence, but that all persons of whatever degree or profession who shall be convicted of receiving fees or other pecuniary acknowledgements from robbers knowing them to be such, or of abetting or conniving in any way at their practices, shall be adjudged equally criminal with them and punished with death, and that this be immediately made public throughout the province. . . .

The only objection to which this plan is liable is the expense, but I with confidence hazard the assertion that this will not equal the loss the cultivation and revenue are liable to from the continuance of the present disorders—although not reducible to any estimate I am assured that many villages, especially in Jessore and Rahmudshahee, pay a regular Malguzarree to the Chiefs of the Decoits, from which, if they can be freed, the ryots will certainly be better enabled to pay their



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

rents to the Government, independently of the improvement which their lands may be expected to receive from a state of quiet and security.

## No. 24. *Kuch Behar and Sunnyasis.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xi, p. 268; Secret Department.

January 15, 1773.

Para. 6. Some time ago the Rajah of Cose Bahar applied to us through our Collector of Rungpore for assistance against the Boutanners, a nation who inhabit the mountains to the Northward of that Province and who have of late years, partly by force and partly by treachery, obtained a dangerous influence in these parts.

Para. 7. Cose Bahar was formerly a part of Bengal, and the present Rajah (a Minor), by means of the Nazir Dir his Minister, offered, on condition of our lending him assistance to drive the Boutanners from his country, once more to put it under the dominion of Bengal, and to pay to the Company half the Revenue he draws from it.

Para. 8. In deliberating on these affairs we had more in consideration the peace and security of our present possessions than any advantage to be derived from the new acquisition we were flattered with; for as your District of Rungpore has been frequently exposed to the incursions of the Boutanners and the Collection of the Revenue, drawn from part of Cose Bahar which depends on Rungpore, thereby rendered very precarious, it became a matter of direct interest to embrace any opportunity which offered of expelling those people from these countries, and confining them within the limits of their own mountains.

Para. 9. In this view we agreed to the proposal of the Nazir Dir and ordered Capt. Jones to proceed immediately with four Companies of Sepoys and two pieces of cannon on the expedition, and as the Committee of Circuit were then in those parts we employed them to negociate and settle the treaty between the Company and the Rajah. A copy goes a number in this Packet.

Para. 10. You will observe that there is a clause in the treaty which leaves it to the ratification of your Honourable Court. In the meantime we shall endeavour to see all the conditions carried provisionally into execution. Our troops have hitherto met with all the success we could wish, Capt. Jones having carried the town of Bahar by assault with no

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

considerable loss, although we hope so spirited a beginning will serve in a good degree to intimidate the Boutanners we have ordered a reinforcement to Capt. Jones, that he may be able to pursue with efficiency his first advantage and bring the matter to a speedy issue.

Para. 12. At the . . . Board it was resolved, for the better protection of the Districts of Rajamal and Boglepoor from the depredations of the banditti who inhabit the neighbouring mountains, to raise and establish a new corps of Light Infantry to be employed on that service. The command has been given to Capt. Robert Brooke. . . .

Para. 13. A set of lawless banditti known under the name of Sunnasses or Faquirs have long infested these countries and under the pretence of religious pilgrimages have been accustomed to traverse the chief part of Bengal, begging, stealing, and plundering wherever they go and as it best suits their convenience to practise.

About a month ago intelligence was received by the Collector of Rungpore that a body of these men had come into his District and were plundering and ravaging the villages as usual. Upon this he immediately detached Capt. Thomas with a small party of Pergunnah Seapoys, or those troops who were employed only in the Collections, to try to repress them. Capt. Thomas soon came up with them and attacked them with considerable advantage, but his seapoys imprudently expending their ammunition and getting into confusion, they were at length totally defeated and Capt. Thomas, with almost the whole party, cut off. This affair, although disagreeable on account of the death of a gallant officer, can have no other bad consequence, as we have taken proper steps to (subject) these people to a severe chastisement, and at all events to drive them from the country, and we hope from the precautions which we now find it necessary to take, of stationing a more considerable force on these frontiers, effectually to put an end in the future incursions of the Sunnasses.

## No. 25. *Punishment of Mutiny.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xi, p. 253; General Letter, Public Department.

January 15, 1773.

Para. 32. We are sorry to acquaint you that Captain Evans, commanding a battalion in your service, was shot dead at the head of your troops by a sepoy officer he had reduced for bad behaviour.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Capt. Camac, next in command, called a Council of Officers on the spot, and had the ruffian dragged to death by horses in the front of the line.

So exemplary a punishment, although perhaps attended with some irregularity, we deemed highly necessary on so extraordinary an occasion and approved of Capt. Camac's conduct accordingly.

No. 26. *Operations against the Bhutanese.*

British Museum Add. MS. 29198, p. 121.

Camp at Baginiss Guat.

*Copy of Orders by Capt. Stewart.*

January 28, 1773.

Extract.

As the superiority of English sepoys over their enemies, as likewise their own safety, consist entirely in their steadiness and attentiveness to the commands of their officers, it is ordered that no black officer or sepoy pretend to act or quit his post without positive orders to that purpose from an European officer, under pain of being tried as a traitor to the service. Should the troops be fortunate enough to come to action, when Capt. Stewart gives the order to make ready, front rank are to kneel without cocking their firelocks; and when the word 'fire' is given instead of presenting they are to rest the points of their bayonets upon the ground, and come to a recover as soon as the rear ranks have discharged. They are to remain in this position until the rear ranks have primed and loaded, without the enemy by pushing on render their giving fire necessary, in which case they will receive orders for that purpose, but not until the enemy are close upon them. Should any man fire without orders he is to be put to death upon the spot. As the order to commence firing will not be given till the enemy are very near, it is expected the men will level truly and do great havock amongst them. . . .

February 2nd. Camp near Jellpye Gowrie.[1]

From the behaviour of the troops this morning in front of the united army of the Rajah and the Sunassies, Capt. Stewart

[1] Jalpaiguri or Julpigoree, on the Tista River, capital of a district forming the northern boundary of Rungpore; now in Rajshahi. Lat. 26° 31′ 20″, Long. 88° 45′ 38″.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

is sorry to say that his utmost efforts to their honor and safety must fall far short of their intent, without his orders are more regularly obeyed and attended to ; one hundred well disciplined and regular troops if opposed to the battalion must have gained a certain victory over them. The bravery of the troops Capt. Stewart is perfectly satisfied with, but their irregularity would undoubtedly have made them a prey to their enemies had they only availed themselves of their misbehaviour.

In future it is positively ordered, that any black officer, noncommissioned officer or sepoy who shall presume to quit his rank be instantly put to death on the spot.

As regularity and obedience are our grand and only superiority, they cannot be too rigorously enforced: Where the honor and the lives of the Whole are concerned, it is justice to destroy that part which would foolishly throw them away. But should a future opportunity bring us face to face with our enemies, Capt. Stewart still sincerely hopes that the behaviour of the troops will render this severe order unnecessary.

ROBERT STEWART, Captain 3rd Brigade.

*Report of Capt. Stewart enclosing above Order.*

HON. SIR,

The severity of the Order after the action of the 2nd inst. is certainly too much, for never did men behave with a nobler or steadier resolution than the 19th Battalion showed on that occasion and persevered in till the enemy were most completely routed: but as it is my opinion that the smallest tendency to irregularity in soldiers cannot be too palpably stigmatized, I chose the very moment of their success to severely upbraid them for being over anxious in the pursuit, determined to convince them that success and victory should not excuse the slightest impropriety or deviation from orders. When I assure you upon my honor, that there were only forty odd cartridges expended that day, though I formed the Battalion in the very teeth of the enemy, and was within 50 yards of them before they took to flight, I make no doubt but that you will readily allow the conduct of the Battalion to have been such as seldom happens in this or any other country.

ROBERT STEWART.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

No. 27. *Bhutanese and Sunnyasis: further operations.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xi, p. 362; Secret Department.

March 1, 1773.

Para. 15. In our last we acquainted you with the treaty we had entered into with the Nazir Dir of Cose Bahar, and with our operations in course. We have now the pleasure of informing you that everything has succeeded there to our wish. The Boutanners continue to retire before Capt. Jones, and the capital of Durrup Deo, the Zemindar of Bycunpore, who was in alliance with the Boutanners, has been lately taken by Capt. Stewart at the head of the 19th Battalion, which was detached into the country after the Sunassies, a service which by accident became connected with the other. The Boutanners have lately made overtures for peace, but on them we can have no reliance, nor shall they interrupt our operations, which we shall continue until we have effectually settled their country.

Para. 16. After the defeat of Capt. Thomas' party we took every precaution to prevent any further danger from the Sunassies and also to bring them to punishment for the past. We ordered out parties everywhere in pursuit of them and, as we have noted above, ordered Capt. Stewart, who was on his march down the country, immediately to turn off with his Battalion in quest of them, and obtained every advantage that could be expected against an enemy that came only to plunder, and would not hazard a defeat; and we have the satisfaction to inform you that the country, which, a little more than two months ago, was overrun with them, is now entirely cleared from them. The disposition which we have since formed for the security of your frontiers will, we hope, prove an effectual prevention against the like disturbances hereafter. We have been more full in our advices upon this subject than perhaps it may merit from its real importance, because we consider it as one of those points which derive their importance from popular opinion. Their ravages have never been marked by any very bad effects on the Collections or peace of the country, neither indeed do we apprehend any great loss from the violences to which they have proceeded in the late invasion, but the loss of Capt. Thomas, an officer of distinguished merit and held in general esteem, has drawn the attention of the public upon them and furnished us with an additional motive for maintaining the credit of your Government against the like insults.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Para. 17. In conformity to your orders for new regulating the Army we have entirely abolished the distinction of the Purgunnah Seapoys, reformed the Supernumerary Battalions, and otherwise put the whole army on a new establishment.

## No. 28. *Sunnyasis.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xi, p. 429; Secret Department.

March 31, 1773.

Para. 1. Our last from this department was dated the 1st of this month and went by the *Rockingham.*

Para. 2. We then informed you, in consequence of the assurances which we ourselves had received from various parts of the Province, that the Sunassies had entirely abandoned the country. We are now concerned to contradict this intelligence and to mention that they still continue in different bodies to traverse and distress the country.

Para. 3. Every step however has been taken to intercept and expel them. Four Battalions of sepoys are actually employed on this service. Positive orders have also been issued under severe penalties to all Zemindars and Farmers to send the earliest intelligence of their route and motions, and we are in hopes that these measures will have some degree of success, tho' it is remarkable that we meet obstacles every day in the superstition of the inhabitants, who in spite of the cruelties and oppressions which they undergo from these people are so bigoted in their veneration for them as to endeavour on every occasion to screen them from the punishment which they are exposed to from our Government.

Para. 4. Capt. Edwards, who was early despatched with three Companies of Purgunnah Seapoys on the first advice of Capt. Thomas' defeat, after a long series of fruitless attempts to come up with and engage them unhappily underwent the same fate, and as it appears through the cowardice of his seapoys, who deserted him in an action with a great body of Sunassies whom he encountered in the district of Silberris.

## No. 29. *Hill-men of Rajmahal.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xii, p. 152; Revenue Department.

November 10, 1773.

Para. 17. In our advices from the General Department by the ships of the last season, you were informed of our having raised a Battalion of Light Infantry for the purpose of reducing

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

to subjection the refractory mountain chiefs, whose countries are situated between Monghir, Boglepore and Beerbhum. The President in the Consultation of the 22nd of June acquainted us with the success which had attended the operations of Capt. Brooke in the execution of this plan, particulars of which are recorded in that day's Proceedings.

In consequence thereof we formed an arrangement authorizing Capt. Brooke to consult with the Collectors of Monghir, Boglepore and Beerbhum, and make the Settlement of the districts he might reduce to subjection in their several Collectorships, but upon reconsidering this subject in the Consultations of the 15th of October, upon the President's return from Patna, we determined that the whole of these mountainous countries should be left to the management of Capt. Brooke as the Revenue from them is too inconsiderable for the expense of a Civil Establishment, and as, under the arrangement we had before planned, Capt. Brooke was continually liable to embarrassments by contradictory applications from the different Collectors. We have directed him now to correspond with the Board of Revenue on the business of the Collections and to follow solely the orders of the President in carrying on his military operations. It does not appear that any considerable addition is likely to be made to the Collections by the acquisition of these districts, but it will contribute to maintain peace and tranquillity in the interior parts of the Province, which for many years past have been continually infested by the ravages of the wild and lawless inhabitants of the mountains, and the suppression of their disorders will eventually produce an increase to the Revenue in those Districts which lye contiguous to the hills.

We have in like manner separated the districts of Ramgur, Polamow and Nagpore from the Province of Bahar and continued them under the management of Capt. Camac with similar instructions to those given to Capt. Brooke.

[The original dispatches on the subjects treated in Nos. 21–29 are to be found in the *Bengal Secret Consultations*, Range A. 25.]

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

# CHAPTER VII

## TRADE REFORMS AND FINANCE

Trade in 1772—The Investment; faults of the Gomastah system, of the Dadni system—Comptroller of the Investment—Company's Bond Debts reduced—General Trade—Declining Asiatic trade—Customs Reforms—Final abolition of Dustuks—The Oudh door reopened—State appropriates monopolies in Salt and Opium—Reforms of Currency.

THE whole complicated mass of trade concerns suffered from the disorders in Bengal between 1757 and 1772, and it had become an imperative necessity to reorganize each branch of trade on the basis of the Company's new responsibility.

The abuse of the inland trade had indeed been condemned and checked, at least in its open manifestations, by the Regulations of 1768,[1] but even the Company's investment and the permitted private trade of its servants caused inevitable friction with the Nizamut under the Dual System. For while that endured, the first object of every covenanted servant was commercial—to procure goods cheaply, whether for himself or his employers. This aim brought him unavoidably into conflict with the revenue officer of the Nizamut; for the ryot-weaver was the victim of both. If on the one hand he paid the tax-gatherer's exorbitant demands he had no means left for carrying out his weaving contract, and the English agent took summary vengeance. More often the latter was first in the field and, since he cared nothing if the revenue was defrauded, protected the weaver by force against the claims of the Nizamut until such time as the cloth pledged to the Company was completed.

But when the East India Company began to receive the revenues the rival interests coalesced, and the English perceived that to remove the oppressions of trade was the direct way to stimulate the growth of revenue, and that they could only do so by themselves exercising the government. When

[1] *Vide* Chap. III.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

they assumed the Diwani the trade became of secondary importance to them, while care of the ryot's welfare, upon which hung the returns of revenue and trade alike, was bound to take the first place in any statesmanlike view. It did so with Hastings, but it was some years before the Directors saw the need for it as plainly as he.

His administration of trade affairs is to be considered under two aspects. There was first the question of the Company's investment, and secondly that of the general trade of Bengal. By his commercial experience Hastings was well equipped to deal with the one; as Governor he would have a greater interest in fostering the other.

The state of the investment Hastings could judge from his recent experience in Madras. There he had spared no pains to introduce the gomastah system,[1] and he would gladly have continued the same in Bengal, as he held that it offered less scope for oppression. He was, however, debarred from such a course by a recent dispatch in which the Directors had ordered his predecessors[2] to abolish the gomastah in favour of the Dadni method. 'As freedom in trade is necessarily productive of its increase, the mode of providing your Investments by Gomastahs, Delols and Pykars must be a perpetual bar to that freedom . . . we therefore hereby order and direct that you revert to your former practice of providing Investments by contracts with Dadney Merchants; invite as great a number of Merchants to deliver Proposals, and make your contracts as extensive as possible. . . . We assure ourselves that by such means the manufactures of Bengal will soon be restored to their former degree of fineness and estimation; so that our ships may not, as of late, be returned to us with depreciated fabrics, some of which have scarce [i. e. are scarcely worth] their original cost.'

Bad work was a natural result of the gomastahs' practice of cutting down the payment of the weavers far below market rates, and counterbalanced any advantage in low prices which this monopolizing system had formerly produced to the Company. It was a short-sighted policy, as the Directors now

[1] *Vide* Chap. II.

[2] *Bengal Dispatches*, v, April 10, 1771.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

saw, and their perception was perhaps quickened by the gomastahs' pernicious habit of accumulating bad debts. When the weaver failed to supply the due amount or quality of cloth dictated by his contract the gomastah entered the deficit against him in the Company's books as a debt to be worked off.[1] But this was apt to result only in his increased inability to accomplish the full tale of the next engagement, and these arrears, instead of being worked off, increased against him season by season; the prospect of their acquittance grew constantly more remote, and the Company's books were loaded with the vain and deceptive show of them. No such fictitious balances would appear on the books under an open trade such as the Court of Directors now ordered to be set up. They saw, before the issue of *The Wealth of Nations*, that the principles of a free and open trade ought in the nature of things to encourage the producer, and, in the long run if not at once, to enlarge the various branches of industry by which their supplies were furnished.

In zealous advocacy of free trading principles, the Directors now enjoined upon their Bengal staff to reorganize their export trade, employing the Dadni system, or open competition of contractors, instead of Company's agents or gomastahs. Hastings agreed heartily with the principle, but he did not think that the measure proposed would tend to promote it. In his experience he had found that the Dadni merchants tended to combine into as close a body as the gomastahs themselves, and to set up an even worse monopoly, for the gomastah was at least nominally under the control of the Company and could be dismissed for a flagrant offence, whereas the Dadni were their own masters and only liable to punishment by the native magistrates, who, before 1772, had been easily bribed into blindness and silence. Consequently the Company's orders to throw the trade open and grant exclusive privileges neither to their own servants nor to others would have a one-sided effect: while it discouraged the English, who were on the whole the more humane employers, it would not prevent native merchants or other

[1] Gleig, vol. i, p. 308.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Europeans forming powerful 'combines' to control the producers in a given locality and imposing their own terms. Such bodies existed as early as 1754.[1] Hastings considered that the gomastah system was the lesser evil: in Madras he had succeeded in purging it of its worst features. His objection to the open trade scheme was not a protest against the principle, but against a half-measure which in effect would run counter to it, as proved to be the case.[2]

He consequently expressed great regret at the Directors' orders, and referred them to his Madras Minutes, already on their way to England, to justify and explain his protest. He added: 'I hope the genius and constitution of the two governments will be duly attended to in the judgement that shall be formed.' He admitted that he was not as yet competent to judge of the position in Bengal, and then expressed his doubts whether the new measure would have the effect of opening the trade. 'It will have none but that of debasing the cloths and increasing their price, if the Merchants are to be allowed the same privileges and exclusive powers which were before allowed to the Gomastahs.' In what spirit these protests were received at home does not appear, but it is certain that the orders were enforced and Hastings acquiesced and carried them out with apparent satisfaction. The explanation seems to lie in the different political footing on which the two Presidencies stood. The Madras Council had no authority commensurate with that of the Bengal Diwani, and had consequently found it impossible to control the conduct of the Dadni merchants. In Bengal, on the other hand, Hastings could now reinforce the Company's commercial hold over them by the authority of the Government, and his new Plan of Justice was calculated to make the reformed law-courts a terror to the Dadni merchant as well as to other offenders.

On the whole, however, the success of the new measure seems to have been doubtful. Its first effect was to raise the cost of the investment, for it restored prices to a more normal level. In December 1773 the business of the investment

[1] *Kasimbazar Factory Records*, May 22, 1754; The Punch merchants.
[2] *Bengal Letters*, vol. x, March 27, 1772, and *vide* p. 236.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

was committed to the charge of an individual to be called 'The Comptroller of the Investment'. This served to disentangle the merely commercial affairs from those of the Government, and to relegate them henceforth to a second place. It depended for its success on stimulating this agent by entrusting him with authority and giving him a direct interest in the business. It recalls a similar plan of Hastings's in Madras, where Charles Smith was given charge of the investment, and it was the first of several similar appointments in Bengal. For Hastings was a believer in entrusting men with personal responsibility—in the policy of the strong man in the right place. 'Choose your man carefully for his task,' he might have said, 'seeing to it that he has the special knowledge required, and then give him a powerful incentive and a free hand;' such at any rate was his practice in the cases of the salt management, the bank, and in negotiations with his neighbours, and it is the policy he urges on his employers for the conduct of the central Government. It is to this that many of his astonishing military successes, as well as administrative improvements, were due, and it was this faculty of selecting the right man and then trusting him that gave to India in her hour of crisis a Goddard and a Popham, and to Bengal a race of devoted, if less known, District officers and collectors.

Having arranged for the efficient purveyance of the goods, the Governor turned his attention to the financial condition of the Company's investment. Under one of his predecessors a practice had sprung up of issuing interest notes on the Calcutta Treasury to pay for investment goods. This resulted in an increase from £351,817 to £1,547,458 by the year 1773, on which an annual interest of £95,636 had to be paid. The blame for this state of things cannot be laid entirely at the doors of the previous Governors, Mr. Verelst and Mr. Cartier. The Directors had insisted on the provision of large investments, regardless of the exhausted state of the country between 1768 and 1772. Hastings stopped the issue of notes,[1] and paid the investment contractors out of the

[1] *Bengal Letters*, vol. xi, p. 59, para. 9.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

funds in the Treasury, with the result that in June 1773 he found the chests empty and was forced to raise a loan of twenty-five lacs. This was, however, a temporary measure, for the revenue collections were then due. The loan was redeemable in December of the same year, and by November the Treasury was already in a position to clear it off.[1] The rate of interest on the old Bond Debts was 8 %; eighteen months of the new Administration had already so enhanced the Company's credit that the Governor was now able to borrow enough money at 5 % to extinguish the Bond Debts. This operation was finally completed by August 1774.[2]

The general commerce of Bengal had dwindled as the internal trade decayed, but not from that cause alone. Dow, a contemporary writer, states that the violence of Nadir Shah and subsequent troubles in Persia had killed the purchasing power of that country. Turkey too was disturbed, and Georgia, Armenia, Syria, and Egypt no longer called for the fine wares of Bengal. The markets of Bussorah and Aleppo were closed, or furnished only the rough native textures; the trade with Eastern Asia had also been long declining; the various princes of Upper India and the maritime provinces, who threw off the Mogul yoke, closed their gates to foreign traders. The whole value of the external trade of Bengal with the countries of Asia is reckoned at no more than £100,000 per annum in 1770.[3]

The first step towards a revival of this commerce would be such a reformation of the internal condition of Bengal as should stimulate the production and lower the prices of her commodities, now raised under great difficulties and largely absorbed by the demands of the Company.

The new Land and Revenue Settlements which Hastings had in view would make for such a revival in so far as they gave the cultivator greater freedom, a broader margin of subsistence, and fuller security. These gains would be still further

[1] *Bengal Dispatches*, vol. vii, p. 391, March 3, 1775.
[2] *Bengal Public Consultations*, vol. liv, p. 242; *Bengal Letters*, vol. xiii, August 22, 1774.
[3] Dow's *History of Hindostan: The State of Bengal*, vol. i, pp. cxiv and cxxxvi.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

secured by a new system of Justice. But the most direct way to stimulate commerce within the country was to revise the Customs Regulations and to lift away the inextricable network of tolls and impositions which were steadily strangling it. The native Government had considered trade as much a source of plunder as the land. The Nizamut levied dues on merchandise and on markets through the Zemindars and other farmers of the land-rents; the local Zemindar or raja added his private claim, and every subordinate agent increased the burden on his own account.[1] The English Company's advent only added to the complexity. They made alterations and asserted privileges which increased the load on the merchant, and their interference with the officers of the Nizamut put an end to any hopes which he might entertain of appealing from the servant to the master. The resultant oppression dismayed those Englishmen who studied its effects, and in November 1765 Francis Sykes, in conjunction with the ministers of the Durbar, attempted a reform, abolishing the lesser chokeys or custom-houses and bringing the authorized number down to twenty-four; but he lacked the power to maintain this improvement, and it is evident that the Zemindars everywhere renewed their exactions and continued to mulct the unhappy trader in innumerable ways.[2]

The Directors had repeatedly protested against this oppressive state of things, though they were far from realizing all the causes that contributed to bring it about. Their dispatch of April 10, 1771, finally forbade the continuance of any privileges to their own servants, and especially that of the dustuk. From the Company's courts interest in the question spread to Parliament, and in 1772 a Committee of the House of Commons sat to investigate the subject.[3] Meanwhile in Bengal Hastings's Council had proceeded to set up a Board of Revenue at the capital, which should have competence to deal with all branches of the Government finance. To make a clean sweep of the extortionate impositions would have endangered the revenue returns. It was necessary first to collect

[1] *Vide* pp. 242, 244.
[2] *I. O. Records*, Range A. 6, p. 747, and Range A. 7, p. 264.
[3] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. vi.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

evidence from the districts as to the value of the various chokeys and the precise channels of native and European trade. It was consequently a year before final orders could be issued. During that year, March 1772 to March 1773, the Committee of Circuit had been at work, the Land Settlement and Plan of Justice had been promulgated, and the ground thus cleared for the new regulations of the customs, which the Board of Revenue issued on March 23, 1773.[1] The most important provisions were: the total abolition of the dustuk, the restraint of Europeans from settling in the districts, and the suppression of the Zemindari chokeys. The only custom-houses left were the five central ones, Calcutta, Hugli, Murshidabad, Patna, and Dacca, and two chokeys to control up-country exports to the north and west. A further notable enactment was the lowering of duties to the fixed rate of 2½ % on all goods, except the three monopolies of salt, betel-nut, and tobacco. This low duty was henceforth to be paid by all alike, the Company, its servants, Europeans of every race, and the native merchants; those formerly entitled to the dustuk being granted certificates which enabled them to claim a drawback from the revenue.

The Land Settlement, the Plan of Justice, and the Reform of the Customs, the three great constructive measures which effected a practical revolution in the condition of Bengal, were thus completed within a year of Hastings's accession to the Presidency. But this revolution, real as it was, involved no breach with the traditions of the past. While it swept away the confusion and corruption of the years since 1756 it restored all that was best in the old order. Safeguards which had been required in the brightest days of the Moguls, provision for the security of the ryot, for the restraint of unjust judges and peculating officials, were enacted now under the stronger shield of the English power. Ashamed to skulk any longer behind the tinsel sham of a Nawab *fainéant*, the Company in these decrees frankly accepted all its responsibilities, and unconscious of its destiny laid the first stones of that edifice of law-abiding freedom upon which so great an Empire was to

[1] *Vide* p. 240.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

grow. It is because of these three measures that the year 1772 must always remain a turning-point in the history of India, less dramatic certainly, but no less important, than that of Plassey. Clive was essentially a soldier and an autocrat; his work made that of Hastings possible, but without the patient insight and tireless effort enshrined in Hastings's measures there can be little doubt that our hold on Bengal would have been as brief in duration as it was rapid in attainment.

With the reform of the old trade abuses the reasons for exclusion from neighbouring markets was rooted out. In future no State need fear that to carry on trade with Bengal merchants must be to quarrel with the English. That had been the view of the Vizier of Oudh. Shuja-ud-Daula was perhaps the most shrewd and capable of the native rulers at this date. While he was anxious to be on the side of the English, whose power he had felt in 1764, he had prohibited commerce with Bengal lest the oppressions practised there might be attempted within his own borders and give rise to strife in which he knew himself sure to succumb.[1] But such a policy on his part was equivalent to shutting the gates between Bengal and her natural markets, the entire 'hinterland' of the Upper Ganges and Jumna Valleys, to which the direct route lay through Benares and Allahabad. The Company soon felt the effect of this blow, and in their dispatch of April 10, 1771, the Directors urged their servants to use every means to procure the reopening of the trade. The abolition of the dustuk enabled Hastings to succeed, and he was careful in his treaties with the Vizier and his vassal Chet Sing of Benares to stipulate for equal duties.[2] He was anxious to see this trade flourish and send out runners far beyond the parent plant, as is evidenced by his exchange of courtesies with the Dalai Llama of Thibet and his inquiries into the possibilities of trade in Kuch Behar.

With private traders restricted to Calcutta and the dustuk abolished, there was little fear that native merchants would hesitate to resume their activities: it was only in the old

[1] *Vide I. O. Records*, Range lxviii. 53, p. 30.

[2] *Bengal Letters*, vol. x, p. 211, March 9, 1772, paras. 30 to 49; Gleig, vol. i, p. 354.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

monopolies of salt and opium that they could now complain of oppression, and with these Hastings proceeded to deal. Salt was produced along the coasts of the Twenty-four Parganas, Burdwan, Midnapore, Dacca, and Chittagong, by an inexpensive process of evaporation of the sea-water in salt-pans, and was the hereditary occupation of a low-caste people called Molungis. Great quantities were needed in Bengal with the rice and fish diet of the people, and it was also given to animals. The only substitute was earth-salt and a coarse rock-salt found in the Rohilla country. Under native rule the trade had been free, and salt could be sold at Calcutta for Rs. 25 per 100 maunds (1 maund = 100 lb.), but in the hands of monopolists the price was raised 200 %, and became the chief object of the Society of Trade, and after 1766 the only one. In 1766 the duties on salt amounted to £22,500, in 1767 to £92,250.[1]

The Company was concerned in the salt trade both as a producer—for some of the most profitable salt-lands lay in the Twenty-four Parganas, their own zemindari—and as the receiver of the revenues. In 1768 the Directors had put an end to the Society's monopoly of salt, regardless of Clive's protests, in the endeavour to restore the trade to natives. But the result was quite otherwise. The paramount influence of the supervisor in each district made it dangerous for natives or Europeans to compete with him if he chose to farm the salt-lands, and instead of an openly conducted monopoly, shared by the senior servants, the trade became the close preserve of these men acting as private individuals unchecked and unregulated. This was of course a bold infraction of the Company's orders against inland trading. The usual result ensued in oppression and confusion. Quarrels arose between the various English salt traders, such as Messrs. Reed and Killican, claiming old balances from the Molungi salt-makers and accusing one another of oppressing them. Hastings's view of this state of things led him to hold that if any monopolies were to exist they should be vested in the Company, as no private individual could have any right to them. He had once ardently advo-

[1] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. iv, p. 99.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

cated throwing the trade open, but had recognized the impracticability of that counsel of perfection. In the summer of 1772 his Council, acting as a Committee of Revenue, made many inquiries on the subject and determined to reform the trade on some uniform plan. They decided in October that no salt was to be made except for the Company, and that the farmers of the revenue were to be permitted to undertake the management of the manufacture by making advances to the Molungis. Farmers were to take the salt-lands on five-year leases, contracting to produce a given amount each year. It was to be sold at a regulated price to merchants, who should contract annually for amounts not exceeding 50,000 maunds. They were to pay the customs dues of 10 % with the purchase-money to the farmers, who would remit it with their rents to the Treasury, and so each party would be a check on the other and obviate the need for special customs officers. Farmers were readily found to accept these conditions, and by December 3, 1772, the lands of Burdwan, Dacca, Jessore, and the Twenty-four Parganas were let, the salt being contracted for at an average price of Rs. 70 per 100 maunds. But on advertising for merchants to purchase it the Government received very few answers, and in March 1773[1] it was resolved to sell it by auction in small lots of 10,000 maunds, so as to invite the competition of smaller merchants. A profit of £120,000 was anticipated, which would give a surplus sufficient to pay off old debts incurred on this account. This system was challenged by Philip Francis in 1775, but Hastings defended it in these terms: 'No new Hardship has been imposed on the Salt Manufacturers by taking the Management of that Article into the Hands of Government. The only Difference is that the Profit which was before reaped by English Gentlemen and by Banyans is now acquired for the Company . . . they receive from the Salt Business a net Revenue of £120,000, which I believe is four Times as much as they have ever before received except in the Time of the Society of Trade. . . . [It gives] this further advantage, that by destroying all Private claims to the

[1] *Bengal Letters*, vol. xi, pp. 373, 450, para. 20

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Labor of the Molungees it leaves the Government at full Liberty on the Expiration of the present Leases, to make whatever Regulations they may judge most adviseable.'[1] These arrangements received the approval of the Court of Directors in their dispatches of March 3, 1775, and December 24, 1776. The first sale was held on May 1, 1773,[2] under the charge of the superintendent of the Khalsa and two members of the Council. After the accession of the new Government of October 1774, set up by Lord North's Regulating Act, the management was committed to the Board of Trade, a branch of the Calcutta Council, and a duty of 30 sicca rupees per 100 maunds imposed on all imported salt by the advice of Francis, contrary to Hastings's opinion,[3] and in the next year all imports of salt were forbidden, but after a time this measure had to be suspended. No really satisfactory policy had been found. The profit from the trade in the years 1772 to 1774 was Rs.325,47,061. Constant discussion followed in the years 1775 to 1777. In a Minute of September 24, 1776, Hastings advocated entrusting the manufacture to the Zemindars of the salt-lands, but in 1777 a fresh scheme of his was adopted, which returned to the former method of letting the salt mhals for a ready-money rent, inclusive of the duties. The trade still diminished, and in 1780 it was put into the hands of a Comptroller with an agent in each district, and a total prohibition was once more laid on all imports of salt. These measures were no more satisfactory than the former; probably that of 1772, lowering the duty to Rs. 10 and the price to Rs. 75 per 100 maunds, was the least oppressive, but in no case does the profit to the Company appear to have countervailed the deprivation to the consumer.

In the years 1770 to 1773 the profits from duties alone amounted to:

| | £ |
|---|---|
| 1770 | 70,914 |
| 1771 | 61,663 |
| 1772 | 45,027 |

[1] *Bengal Secret Consultations*, Range A. 27, p. 1246.
[2] *Bengal Letters*, vol. xii, p. 43.
[3] *Home Miscellaneous*, 92, Salt, p. 28.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Those from duties and sales together from 1773 to 1775 were :

| | £ |
|---|---|
| 1773 . . . . . | 229,192 |
| 1774 . . . . . | 130,263 |
| And in 1775 there was a deficit of . . . | 1,473 |

The Company made a profit again in the next year :

| | £ |
|---|---|
| 1776 . . . . . | 139,021 |
| 1777 . . . . . | 54,160 |

After the appointment of a Comptroller the profits rose :

| | £ |
|---|---|
| 1781 . . . . . | 321,912 |
| 1782 . . . . . | 655,646 |
| 1783 . . . . . | 603,076 |

but this was due to further oppression, as the alternative source of supply by import was now stopped.

Hastings seems in fact to have underestimated the hardship involved in this monopoly, for in 1783 he pointed to the profit as 'unencumbered with official charges, unexposed to invasion, a rich dominion without garrison or a military establishment, and all of my own creation'.

The second monopoly was the trade in opium. This commodity was grown in perfection in Bahar and especially in the neighbourhood of Patna; an inferior kind could be raised in Bengal. The monopoly dated from 1761, and in 1765 had lain in the hands of the Patna servants, who kept the profits for themselves. Heated discussions arose on this subject. The trade was leased to two natives in 1773, but in 1774 Hastings converted it to the Company's use on the same principles as the salt monopoly, and in 1775 it was put up to auction and from that time managed by an English servant. An account of this trade given in the Company's records[1] towards the close of the century states that 'opium was sold in the Country and the produce laid out in Country Merchandize for the Company's export'. This would apply to the period after 1774, and shows that this trade at least did not drain the country of

[1] *Home Miscellaneous*, 92, p. 61.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

its specie as did the investment. The annual profits of the trade during Hastings's administration were as follows[1]:

| | £ | | £ |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1773 . . | 39,837 | 1779 . . | 57,527 |
| 1774 . . | 14,256 | 1780 . . | 8,475 |
| 1775 . . | 56,255 | 1781 . . | 68,912 |
| 1776 . . | 21,908 | 1782 . . | 43,470 |
| 1777 . . | 22,149 | 1783 . . | 78,300 |
| 1778 . . | 49,572 | 1784 . . | 53,348 |

These profits were applied to the special object of providing salaries for the Chiefs of Divisions, officers newly created by Hastings in 1774.[2] The same reasons which justified the conversion of the salt trade into a monopoly of the Company in Hastings's view applied with extra force to the opium trade, for it was of a peculiar character. The supply was liable to striking fluctuations according as the season was favourable or not to the crop. The demand, on the other hand, being almost as constant as that for a necessary of life, made the trade peculiarly liable to the abuse of forestalling and other speculative proceedings, and it was the more desirable that the Government should have control of the sales.

The sale of saltpetre was another monopoly, which had been first granted to the Company by Mir Jafar in 1758. Most of the saltpetre too came from Patna, a district which had formerly been more densely populated, but about a quarter of the whole was derived from Purnea and Oudh; in all about 1,500 tons reached Calcutta yearly. The trade was almost entirely an export one, and the profits were reckoned at sums varying from £17,000 to £27,000 per annum. These were, however, in the opinion of the Company's auditor in 1786 more imaginary than real, as the charges involved in procuring and exporting were inadequately computed.[3] The trade in betel-nut and tobacco seems to have been treated apart, and these two commodities paid a 30 % duty, but there does not

[1] *Home Miscellaneous*, 92.
[2] *Vide* Chap. VIII, revenue reforms.
[3] *Home Miscellaneous*, 92, Saltpetre and opium, p. 61, &c.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

appear to be any clear record of the measures taken in regard to them.

Trade set free might be expected to grow immensely in bulk and in value, but there still lacked the essential to this end, a sound currency.

The depletion of the currency was perhaps the most threatening feature of the whole outlook. It had been causing grave anxiety to Presidents since Clive's day. While in Madras, Hastings had heard surprising reports of the scarcity of coin in the younger Presidency. He agreed with his predecessors in ascribing it to three chief causes. The first was the Mogul's tribute. Whereas the payments made to the Nawab returned in expenditure to the circulation of the provinces, those to Shah Alam passed out of the country altogether. Hastings was acting in the supreme economic interest of Bengal when he withheld the king's tribute.

No less harmful was the tribute paid to the Company in the form of the revenues. Had these enormous sums been entirely exported they would have constituted a far worse drain than the other, but in fact a large proportion and sometimes the whole returned to the circulation in the form of advances for the investment or interest on loans made for the same purpose, the payment of troops or officials of the Company, and after 1772, of the Diwani. It is hard to say how much specie was actually lost to the currency through this channel, but it undoubtedly accelerated the depletion, and so did the sums annually carried off by individuals who made fortunes in India in order to spend them at home.

The third channel, and the hardest of all to stop, was the native tendency to hoard or bury treasure in times of disturbance, while further sums were lost to the trade of the country through being converted into jewels and ornaments. The coinage too was on an unsatisfactory footing. The rupee was the common coin, for though the Moguls had minted a gold coin, the mohur, worth sixteen rupees, it had never displaced silver as the accepted currency of India. But there were rupees of various values. Many mints had been set up by the permission of the emperors or through the independent action of their

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

vassals on the collapse of the Empire, and the only coin of the original value of the Delhi rupee was the Murshidabad sicca rupee. Many districts in Bengal employed a rupee minted locally, and serious loss was incurred when the revenues or large sales were paid in these coins. It was the custom to make a fresh issue even of the sicca rupee in each year, and as the coins were without alloy their value was soon perished and the better coins passed out of the country.

To remedy these evils and provide trade with a really satisfactory medium Hastings adopted the sicca rupee of 1773 (the nineteenth year of Shah Alam) as the standard coin, put an end to annual recoinage, closed the Patna mint, and made Calcutta the only place of issue, publishing the rates at which the Treasury would receive the depreciated rupees of other districts. This measure succeeded so well that the sicca rupee of 1773 continued to be the standard coin till our own time.

Another measure to assist the currency, which had been advocated among experienced servants of the Company, was the establishment of a bank.[1] Money-lending had been hitherto in the hands of individual shroffs, amongst whom the house of Jagat Seth was the most famous. Transactions involved the actual carriage of bullion from place to place at immense expense and risk of loss both from those employed to convey it and from the many robbers who infested the provinces. There was also constant loss to the merchant from exchanges of the local rupees. The new proposal was to entrust certain responsible shroffs with the management of a bank at Calcutta, into which the revenues should be paid through branch houses set up at each Collectorship. These branches would receive the revenue payments from the Collectors in the current coin of the particular district, which coins they would find no difficulty in returning into the local circulation, while their bills only were to be accepted by revenue officials at the districts and head-quarters of the Khalsa. The banks would thus obviate the necessity for

[1] British Museum Add. MS. 29207; *Bengal Revenue Consultations*, 5, Range 49, vol. 42; *Bengal Letters*, vol. xi, p. 437, para. 17.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

treasury staffs at the Collectorships, and would in Calcutta act as the agent of the Khalsa much as the Bank of England acts for the Treasury, and share its profits with the Company. The first managers appointed were Raja Huzoorimul and Raja Dolchund, men of credit among the Zemindars, who would thus be encouraged to employ the bank in their own affairs. The natives were too much accustomed to fraud and oppression to believe readily that any public body could be safely entrusted with their treasure. Although, to judge from an inquiry held into the effects of its working,[1] the bank appears to have achieved its objects, it was abolished in February 1775.

It granted bills first at the Company's rate of exchange and later at par instead of at the exorbitant rates formerly exacted, and the only sufferers from its institution seem to have been the private money-lenders. In addition to the simplification of the revenue business, it proved of value to private merchants, whose remittances could be made quickly and without risk; it confined the use of local coins to their own districts and obviated the loss involved in frequent exchanges, besides offering the natives an introduction to the advantages of a more extended credit system.

The forwarding of traffic was further aided at this period by the work of surveyors and roadmakers. Captain J. Rennell had been appointed Surveyor to the Company on November 26, 1764,[2] and had in that year made a survey of the Ganges valley. He later completed maps of the provinces and charts of the coast, which remain the cartographical authorities for Bengal. In 1774 Hastings organized a regular service of posts along the main routes from Calcutta northward to Patna and eastward to Dacca. At the same time the measures taken by the Governor to clear the provinces of the great bands of Sunnyasis, religious fanatics who annually made armed incursions from the hills, and to settle the Company's relations with their warlike neighbours in Kuch Behar, greatly contributed to the security of Bengal trade.

[1] British Museum Add. MS. 29207; and Letter to Macleane, February 22, 1775, British Museum Add. MS. 29127.

[2] *Bengal Abstracts*, vol. i, p. 142.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VII

### Trade Reform and Finance.

### No. 1. *Company's Investment.*

*Bengal Public Consultations*, 52. (*Report of the Kasimbazar Inquiry into the cause of rise in prices of silk.*)

May 25, 1772.

Para. 1. [In the famine of 1770] so considerable was the mortality among the people who used to employ themselves in the cultivation of the mulberry plant that scarcely one-half survived . . . hardly more than a fourth of the land is now cultivated, the rest lays waste, and the Zemindar in order to perform his engagements with Government is necessitated to levy from this small portion of land the full amount of the Revenue which he had collected on the whole when in the most flourishing condition, and the poor labourer, deprived of every other means of satisfying the heavy demands of his Zemindar, is of course obliged to raise the price of his cocoons.

Para. 2. The rearing of the silkworm is a business held in abomination by the people in general of the Gentoo caste, and confined to only one class of them.

Para. 3. One considerable obstacle to the success of the Silk Investment has proceeded from the footing on which it has hitherto been conducted, interfering so much with the Revenue branch . . . the person employed in the provision of the Investment, whose credit depended on the success of that alone, naturally bestowed his whole attention thereto, indifferent how far his measures clashed with the object of the pursuit or with the interest of the Collector or the Country in general; while on the other hand the Collector may be suspected of having paid little attention to the representations of the commercial agent. The absolute necessity of connecting the commercial with the Revenue department [emerges as the most pressing feature of any reform to be undertaken].

### No. 2.

*Bengal Letters*, vol. x, p. 287.

March 27, 1772.

Postscript.

Para. 2. We come now to speak on the subject of your orders of the 10th of April last recd. per the *Lord Holland*, for reverting to the former mode of providing an Investment by Dadney Merchants. In our letter of the 10th of January last

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

by the *Speake* and *Asia* we mentioned our having in consequence of those orders advertised for receiving Proposals both here and at the Subordinates.

Para. 3. At the first view we may pronounce of those Proposals without distinction that instead of being adapted to the salutary purposes intended of giving freedom and increase to Trade they have a direct contrary tendency. The offers are not from a number of individual merchants that might render such a provision diffusive at a moderate advance for their trouble and risk, but from a body of men whose requisitions imply a monopoly, and that too upon very extravagant terms which appear to be merely calculated to benefit themselves not only to the manifest injury of the trade here, but to a certain and heavy loss upon your sales at home.

These are the obvious and principal Objections to which the Proposals of the Merchants are exposed upon a General View of the matter; if we descend to Particulars many may be enumerated, such as the immediate Loss of the greater part if not the whole of the Ballances due from the Weavers; the certain loss of 25% on the Amount of the Investment supposing that the weavers (which the Merchants represent to be necessary) are allowed an advance on the present price of their cloths of 5%; the debasement of the Manufacture, a probable if not certain consequence of providing by contract if we are to judge from past experience, instead of leaving the door open to such improvements as may be recommended; a deficiency of the quantity contracted for, as they were never known to furnish the quantity stipulated, in the provision of so extensive an Investment.

Para. 4. Your orders for resuming the mode of Dadney being positive, We should be the more cautious of the least deviation from them; but when we consider that by an adherence to the letter of those orders under the circumstances already described, the spirit of them would be totally lost, We are convinced that we shall stand justified in your eyes for considering ourselves to be under the necessity of suspending the execution of them until it can be done in a manner more consistent with your immediate Interests and the General Good of the Country. . . .

Para. 5. Had we the least prospect of removing any evils that may be existing it would require much time and consideration to effect such a total change in a mode established by the practice of near 20 years in a branch so very extensive. . . .[1]

[1] For further accounts of the investment see *Bengal Dispatches*, v. 35 and 378, vi. 380 and 438.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

## No. 3. *Comptroller appointed.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xii, p. 175; General Letter, Secret Department.

December 30, 1773.

Para. 8. The business of your Investment, which we have always regarded as most interesting in its consequences, being nevertheless in its detail little subject to the immediate inspection of the Board, and the multiplicity and variety of the other objects which necessarily engross our attention rendering it still more difficult to attend properly to that branch, especially since the absence of several of our members at the Chiefships, we thought it expedient to consign to the care of one of our number particularly, and as Mr. Aldersey had as head of the Committee of Commerce bestowed particular attention on that business, we entrusted him with the new charge, under the name of Comptroller of the Investment. All the detail, current business and Aurung correspondence are managed by him and he reports to us and takes our orders occasionally. We hope that this arrangement will prove of great service to the Company and meet your approbation.

## No. 4. *High prices result from open trade.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xiii.

October 17, 1774.

Having in compliance with your instructions used every endeavour to make the provision of your Investment by contract and advertised in due time for receiving proposals for the Investment of the present year several were delivered in before the departure of the *Resolution*, but those for Patna were on terms of advantage which we were induced to accept.[1] . . .

We flatter ourselves you will find this valuable article[2] of your Investment much improved and that it will soon be recovered from the declining state to which it has been reduced since the famine, we mean with respect to the quality of the goods. The price still continues very high, nor can we devise any means of reducing it consistently with the encouragement that has been given for a free and open trade, the necessary consequence of which is an enhancement on the price of the goods in those places where any restrictions might have before prevailed. In such a predicament, particularly in Raw Silk Radanagore in Burdwan Province which so many years has been taken at an arbitrary price, that is, at such rates as were

[1] *Vide* Letter of February 7, 1774. [2] i.e. silk.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

judged sufficient for the maintenance of the ryots or original providers. It then came to less than 6 rupees per seer, and accounts for the great and impartial profit gained on that assortment at the sales in Europe, but since those restrictions have been removed in consequence of the system universally adopted for a general freedom of trade, the price of this article has risen from 6 r. to 9 r., at which rate a contract has been entered into for the provision of Radanagore Silk this season and it is still under the market price of that assortment at Calcutta.

[The following documents relate to General Trade.]

No. 5. *Abolition of Dustuks.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xii, p. 380, Revenue Department.

February 27, 1773.

Para. 16. ... We are now employed in arranging and digesting the several Accounts before Us relating to the Customs and that this Subject may be completed without Loss of Time, and in the meanwhile in conformity to your Orders We have published an Advertizement for the total Abolition of Dustucks, to take place on the 12th of April next, being the first day of the Bengal Year.

Para. 17. In lieu of this Priviledge Certificates will be granted to such of your Servants as have been hitherto entitled to it, upon their paying the Established Duties—in like manner with other Merchants—of 2½ %, and upon their solemn Declaration that the Goods were their own Property, of which a Register will be kept and transmitted with such other Materials as may best enable you to determine on the Mode of Compensation which you have been pleased to declare your Intention of substituting for the Loss sustained by this Resumption. We hope you will not think us deficient in that respectful Reliance which We ought to repose in your Justice, if We add that with the Dustuck your Servants will lose the only real Advantage by which the Situation of many, We may say by far the greater part of them, was made preferable to that of Free Merchants, or other Sojourners; and as the prospect of this Superiority was their original Inducement to solicit your Service, their Disappointment will prove not only a very severe Mortification, but will reduce them even far below the Level of other Competitors in Trade, whether Natives, Foreigners or British Subjects, in proportion to their Diligence and Attention to the Duties of their Employs in your Service.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

No. 6. *Minute regarding the future arrangement of the Customs.*

*Bengal Revenue Consultations*, 1, Range 49, vol. 38, p. 1033.

March 23, 1773.

Our Hon. Masters in their Letter dated the 10th of April, 1771, have abolished the Priviledge of Dustucks under a Persuasion that the Use thereof by their own Servants has tended to destroy that Freedom of Trade which they desire to establish for all the Natives of, and Residents in Bengal without exception.

Being persuaded also that much Discouragement arises to the fair trader from his being too frequently, and the Object considered, in general unscrupulously subjected to the exercise of Authority by the number of Chokeys established in all Parts of the Country, they likewise direct the Abolition of them.

The above Orders having been carried into execution, the Board now proceed to form a new system of management for this Branch of the publick Revenue, and the subject being both delicate and important, it is thought necessary to state the reasons and to explain the considerations which have regulated the Judgement of the Board.

As they conceive the present system is exceptionable in all its parts, each of which more or less participates of those ill customs which have contributed to render it so great an Evil to Trade, they think it necessary utterly to abolish every Tax or Duty which by the Custom hitherto observed has been collected on any Necessary of Life, or any Article of Foreign or Inland Trade.

The Board reflect with particular Satisfaction on the Motives and Considerations which induced the Hon. Court of Directors to direct the Abolition of the inferior chokeys for collecting the Customs; because from them they infer a strong desire to revive the Commerce of this Country and a Willingness to submit to a present Reduction in the Revenue arising from their Customs which from the Relief thereby afforded to a declining Trade, they no doubt foresaw, as we ourselves rest assured, that it will revert with most ample Compensation in the numberless good effects which will result from a restored and flourishing Commerce. They therefore with the less Reluctance relinquish Advantages which proceed from improper Sources, and more attentive to the State and Interests of Trade than fixed in the desire of compensating for the Loss sustained by this Reduction they suffer themselves to be guided by what the present Situation of Foreign Commerce

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

suggests rather than by an immediate and exclusive regard to the publick Revenue in this branch.

From a desire to reduce the price of Rice and to facilitate the Circulation of it through all Parts of the Provinces, they have already abolished all the Duties hitherto collected at the Hauts, Gunges, and Sahirs in the Mofussil. But as the Duties and Rents of those wholesale Markets are so much blended with the publick Revenue that an unconditional and undefined Abolition of the former might largely and materially affect the Collections by opening a Door for unreasonable and groundless Deduction, the ascertaining the Amount and tracing the Sources of the Receipts at the Gunges in order to establish a precise Abolition to answer the End proposed without incurring a Loss to the Company must be left to the future researches of the controuling Board of Customs which will be proposed in the Sequel and the relief which is wished to be contributed confined at present to that which is specified in the first Article of the Regulations at the close of this Minute.

The Board are also confirmed in their opinion of the Propriety of this intended Remission when it can be accurately ascertained, because if it should at any Time be held convenient to put an Impost on Grain, they think it would be attended with less Inconvenience as well as be more consistent with the natural right which every District may claim of enjoying the consumption of its own Produce free from Duty, that the Duties on this Article should be collected only at the Capital Towns whither it is brought for Consumption.

Indeed if Objection be made to this natural right, it may be replied that the Cultivators are taxed in the Rate of their Rent, and that as the Manufacturers in this Country are never in a Condition superior to the means of present Subsistence, the cheaper they live the cheaper their Commodities will sell, and that as the necessaries of Life diminish in their price, so will the Means necessary for subsisting the Manufacturer and his Family, there the imposing of Duties upon Grain before he consumes it, will operate with all the Prejudice which arises from taxing the Raw Materials of Manufactures. The Manufacturer though so poor in Credit is compelled to borrow, to pay the Duty as well as to purchase his Rice. Remit this Duty till his products are brought to the Place of Consumption or Export and then charge it upon them, and a certain Effect of it will be the Commodity will be cheaper in proportion to the Interest which the Manufacturer must pay on what he borrows to discharge the Duty on his Rice and that which the petty intermediate Traders pay upon the money they take up



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

for purchasing the Commodity. In short the Amount of Duty will accumulate Interest in every Hand through which the Goods pass, and increase the Price of them to a Degree hardly to be conceived from the comparative Amount of the Duty actually imposed. It may be further observed that 1 % paid at the different Stations in the Route from the Mofussil will be more grievous to the Merchant from the Delays and Interruptions to which he is thereby subjected than 2 % paid at the Place of Consumption or Exportation.

For these reasons the Board intend to for ever abolish all Duties on Grain in the Mofussil as soon as the real amount can be ascertained, and the Effects of the present Suspension of such as have hitherto been levied on the Importation of this Article into the Capital Towns will hereafter influence the Board to renew the Duties or to continue the Suspension of them.

In regard to the Export Trade of these Provinces the Board are of opinion that its Commodities have risen in their prices to a Degree that greatly exceeds the Medium of Trade in Foreign Markets, the European Trade excepted; and to restore our Commerce with them it is absolutely necessary to aim at reducing the price of our Export Goods. In pursuing this Object the Duties upon Grain are proposed to be abolished, and every Impediment removed, which tended to obstruct a free Circulation of it. The same Motive now induces them to fix the Duties of the Country Government at 2½ % upon all Goods exported or imported and upon all Trade in general in these Provinces excepting Grain and such other Articles of Internal Commerce as shall be hereafter specified. The Rate of Duty paid by the Foreign Companies is 2½ % and levied only upon such Accounts of their Traffick as they are pleased to submit to the Officers of the Customs. The benefit of this moderate Duty and the extraordinary Priviledge of being without Check in regard to the Quantity and Valuation of their Goods, which by the extravagant Use that is made of it reduces the Duty to the merest Trifle, is also claimed by Individuals residing under the Flags of the different Foreign Nations. [A full discussion of this situation follows and is thus concluded.] This therefore is of itself a powerful Argument for fixing the Rate universally at 2½ %, since it is not in our Power to change the Priviledge hitherto enjoyed by the Foreign Companies and dangerous to touch them.

But independent of the reasons which arise from this our embarrassed Position towards the Foreign Companies the Board are of opinion that a Commercial State like this ought

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

to regulate its Imports on Trade by the Estimation and Demand which their Commodities bear at Foreign Markets. The decaying State of the Trade of this Country then certainly demands the Encouragement of moderate Duties as well as the aid of every other Incitement to restore it to that State of Superiority which it formerly did and ought ever to maintain over those Countries with which it has Commercial Intercourse.

Having thus proposed an Effectual Relief from all possible Molestation to the Trader in Grain, by destroying all Right or Pretence to interrupt its Passage, in the intended Abolition of every Mode of Taxation on it; and having fixed the Government's Duty at one and the same Rate upon every other Article of Merchandize; it remains to establish the necessary Checks for commanding an effectual Controul over the general Intercourse of Trade throughout the Provinces.

The Situation of this Country in regard to the Transportation of its Commodities is such and the Channel of Exportation so confined that the Board conceive it will be entirely unnecessary to appoint many Stations for the purpose of controuling the Passage of Goods. They calculate that three-fourths of the Trade of the Country consists in the Exports from and the Imports to the Southward—meaning to and from Calcutta and the foreign Settlements; the other fourth, if the Proportion be so large, is to the North and North Westward. The particular Commodities passing in this Track being numerous and trifling it may be difficult to contrive any certain Controul for them; however, a very few Stations judiciously disposed and a vigilant Conduct in the Collector it is to be hoped would in a great measure overcome these difficulties. We know of no Degree of Trade to the Eastward or Westward that can be an Object to the Customs. Indeed what is carried on in those Parts seems chiefly to consist of European and other Country Import Commodities which go from hence and in returns which are either consumed in the Capital Towns or brought for Exportation to the Southward.

It also seems to be agreeable to natural right and never can be against the Interest of a State, when the Channel of Exportation is confined within an easy controul, that every Province should enjoy the Consumption of its own Commodities free of Duty; and in such a Situation it can only be necessary to trace the Progress of the Superfluity and to leave it free and unmolested to the very Consumption and Exportation of it, as far as can be done consistent with the Security of the Publick Duties.

The Poverty of the Inhabitants in the internal Parts of these Provinces will not permit the Enjoyment of Luxuries, which in every State, but more particularly in a Trading one, form the only true and proper Object for Taxation. A mutual Intercourse of Traffick between all the Districts, undiscouraged and uninterrupted by the Insolence of Officers appointed to collect the Customs, cannot therefore be detrimental to the State, nor indeed a Disappointment to our Expectations.

These General Ideas are the Grounds on which the Board proceed to pass the following resolutions for the future Establishment and Regulation of the Duties of the Country Government:

1. That all Duties, Tolls, Fees, or Ground Rents collected at the Gunges shall be collected as usual untill the Board shall establish such new Regulations as they may think necessary, but that all Road Duties, whether by Land or Water, exacted antecedent to the Importation of the Grain shall be entirely prohibited.

And to render this prohibition more effectual, that all the inferior chokeys belonging to the Gunges known by the denomination of Faundees, and at which the road duties have hitherto been collected, shall be abolished and the practice, which has too frequently prevailed, of obliging merchants to bring their goods to particular Gunges or markets, is hereby strictly forbid under the severest penalties, so that every merchant shall be at liberty to carry his merchandize wherever he thinks proper for sale.

2. That every other article of Foreign or Inland Trade, excepting Salt, Beetle-nut, and Tobacco, shall pay a Duty to Government of 2½ %, distinct from the Company's Duty paid in Calcutta, and without exception to any sect or nation whatever.

3. That the duty on Salt and Beetle-nut shall continue on the present established footing and the duty on Tobacco as it shall hereafter be regulated by the Board on the report of the Board of Customs.

4. That an appraisement of every sort of merchandize, formed from the current prices at the different Custom Houses for the purpose of regulating the charge of the Duties, shall be inspected and passed by this Board every 12 months and affixed at every Custom House for public Inspection.

5. That a Board of Customs be established, consisting of a Member of Council and 4 Senior Servants at the Presidency, to inspect, regulate and control the whole business of the Customs.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

6. That 5 Custom Houses be established and stationed at :

Calcutta
Hugli
Moorshedabad,
Dacca
and Patna

under the control of the above Board.

7. That exclusive of these Custom Houses there shall be 2 Chokeys erected to collect the duty on goods exported to the westward through the passes of the hills bounding Midnapore, Bissenpore, Patcheat, and Bhirbhum, and another for collecting the duties on goods exported to the Northward by the Sonassy Merchants who trade from Malda to the upper parts of Hindostan.[1] The stations at which these Chokies shall be fixed and the controul they are to be under to be regulated by the Board of Customs.

8. [The personnel of the Custom House appointed.]

9. [Rowannahs to bear the Company's seal.]

10. [Custom Houses to be open daily except Sundays.]

11. That a rowannah passed at any one of the Custom Houses shall be current throughout the provinces . . . and being endorsed by the Collector, the goods shall pass without interruption or further examination than that of satisfying the Collector the number of boats in the fleet corresponds with the number specified in the rowannah.

12. All Europeans who go up with Fleets of boats are previously to obtain a license from the Board of Customs at Calcutta specifying the length of time they are to be absent and that they have entered into joint security bonds with the persons whose merchandize they conduct to return within that space and on no pretence whatever to attempt to fix a residence in the Out-districts.

13. That to prevent the molestation to which the Natives might possibly be subjected by inserting the name of the merchant in the rowannah, which by distinguishing the proprietor of the merchandize will point out to the officer of the Customs the degree of influence which will oppose his exactions or be exerted for the punishment of them when committed, it is directed that the name of the merchant shall not be specified in the rowannah. . . .

For the further prevention of the like distinction, it be also made a standing order that all boats belonging to persons trading under the English protection, whether Europeans or Natives, be allowed and directed to carry the English flag.

[1] Sunnyasis are spoken of as carrying on trade in Dacca in 1773; *vide I. O. Records*, Range A. 25, p. 150.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

14. [A register to be kept at each Custom House in English, Bengali and Persian.]

15. . . . All attempts to smuggle goods and defraud the Customs will subject them to confiscation. . . .

16. That the Government Custom House and the Company's Custom House be considered as distinct departments and the produce of their respective duties brought to account separately, but the management of both shall be put under the immediate charge of the Board of Customs at the Presidency.

17. That the goods purchased at the Company's Outcry shall not be exempted from the Government duty . . . that the Company's Europe Investment shall also be liable to the same duties as other merchandize.

## No. 7. *The Monopolies. Salt.*

### *Private traders under the open trade system; Messrs. Reed and Killican's disputes.*

*Bengal Public Consultations*, vol. li, p. 351.

February 17, 1772.

[Mr. Reed submits a letter from his Gomastah at Culpee reporting the following complaint from a Molungi salt-maker.]

The complaint of Bejayram Holdar of Mooragautcha against Gunganaram Bose, Mr. Killican's Gomastah in the 24 Pergunnahs.

The 19th Augun or November Gunganaram Bose sent Sunker, Gora, Panuchue, and Mukteram, Pykes (i. e. soldiers) to my house about 4 gurrys after dark; they laid hold of me and told me to come to Gunganaram Bose in order to receive advances on account of Mr. Killican; to which I answered them that I had already received advances from Mr. Reed's Gomastah and that I could not receive from any other. Upon which the said Pykes took from me two rupees, tied and beat me with shoes and fist, by which I fell on the ground. A great number of country people being gathered together, some of them said that I was dead, upon which one of the said Pykes told them it was a trick and took some straw from a thatched house and burnt my arm.

The said Pykes watched me the whole night and the next morning one of them went to Gunganaram Bose, 1 coss distant from my house, to acquaint him of what had been done, who then sent 10 Pykes more in order to bring me with my wife and children before him, which they did accordingly upon a dongah.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Afterwards Gunganaram Bose ordered the Pykes to take bail for my appearance and ordered me back to my house, where he placed 15 Pykes to prevent my going to Calcutta to complain. Two days after that I hired a dooly and in the night-time escaped.

Taken from Bejayram Holdar's own mouth, whose arm appears to have been very much burnt.

[Mr. Reed makes the following statement in his own justification.]

The Sickdar of the Pergunnah in which the dispute arose between Mr. Killican's people and mine, is Saun Bose, who I am informed is that Gentleman's agent, and that the business is carried on by his son, Gunganaram Bose, and as the Sickdar is vested with executive authority in the district it is scarce possible that my people could pursue unjustifiable measures in opposition to him. My advances were made to the Molungis by their own desire in August and September after they had applied to Mr. Russell's banyan to make advances to them for the present season, which he declined doing, and if I had not done it they must have been destitute of the means of subsistence and of working the Khalarries.

## No. 8. *First Regulations issued.*

### *Letter to the Collector of Jessore from the Revenue Board.*

*Calcutta Committee of Revenue Consultations*, 2, Range 67, vol. 54, p. 430.

August 10, 1772.

As we are come to the determination of taking all the Salt into the hands of Government in the same manner as has been obtained in the Hugli Districts, and understanding that a number of Europeans are dispersed over the country carrying on this traffic and that they are likely to interfere and obstruct the course of the regulations we have already issued, we desire that you will issue orders to the Zemindars and other Officers of the Country Government to take such measures as may fully prevent any impediment to our regulations for carrying on that trade. And to preclude any possibility of their advancing the plea of ignorance, you are positively to advertize them that they are in no way to interfere with the Molungis or others engaged in the Salt works on pain of our severe displeasure being shown to the person guilty of the first offence.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

No. 9.

[*Mr. Baber in charge of Midnapore having appealed to the Council on behalf of contractors who had made their contracts before hearing of the new regulations, is thus answered:*]

*Bengal Public Consultations*, vol. lii.

Should it be asserted that it is usual to make advances for salt 12 months before it is received it gives rise to this melancholy reflection, that the condition of those individuals must be miserable whose necessities press them to receive advances so long before they can acquit themselves of their engagements; and this can only be the result of a previous oppression.

To emancipate these wretches is therefore equally an act of humanity and of justice. The merchants, it is true, may consider this relief as a disappointment of their hopes of profiting by the necessities of others, but they can have no right to complain of injustice, if their advances are returned to them.

No. 10. *Modification of the first Regulations.*

*Calcutta Committee of Revenue Consultations*, 2, Range 67, vol. 54, p. 543.

*Letter from Mr. Lushington of Hugli.*

October 1, 1772.

SUMMARY.

[The Revenue Board have empowered Farmers only to work the Salt. But the Molungis hitherto employed by the Government are paid less than those immigrant Molungis who have worked for individuals and the latter must either be paid more or take up other work. This restriction is therefore hard upon the Natives.]

[It is therefore resolved by the Board that the produce of the year is to be entirely devoted to paying off the 12 % balances due to old engagements and that no new engagement of any kind shall be entered into until that is effected. After that the old Contractors are to have the prior right to make fresh contracts.]

Ibid., p. 557.

October 7, 1772.

PLAN OF SETTLEMENT AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE SALT MHALS.

1. That Salt Mhals in every part of the Provinces shall be on the same Footing.

2. That all the Salt be made for the Company.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

3. That the Collaries of each District or Mhal shall be let to Farm for the term of 5 Years [on conditions of which the more important follow].

CONDITIONS.

1. That the Salt when made shall be delivered and disposed of to such Merchants as shall be willing to accept it by Contract for one year only on the following terms.

6. That the Amount of the Duties shall be put upon the Price of the Salt and paid with it, and that the Merchant shall be furnished with Rowannahs for transporting his Salt free of Duties to any part of the two Provinces, and that all Salt attempted to be passed without a Rowannah shall be seized and confiscated to the use of the Company.

## No. 11. *Salt lands farmed on five-year leases.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xi, p. 382.

February 27, 1773.

Para. 21. The former System for carrying on this Trade was productive of the greatest Inconvenience. The merchants who traded in this article were engaged in a labyrinth of perplexed accounts of Ballances due by the manufacturer which, if they did exist, were the consequence of their agents' Mismanagement or of Collusion in the conducting of so complicated a business. The Recovery of these Ballances opened a Source of Violence and Abuse and Government was often obliged to interfere its Authority. An Opportunity was also afforded to smuggling and Embezzlements, so that the established duty of 30 rupees per 100 maunds—which if levied on the whole Salt of Bengal ought to have yielded an Annual Revenue of near 8 Lacks—produced less than 5½, while the Multitude of Officers and other Checks necessary to procure even that Amount proved a heavy Charge to the Company and a great Embarrassment to the trade. The unhealthy Situation of the Country where the Salt is produced, the number of Creeks and Rivulets with which it abounds, added to the extreme Ignorance and Poverty of the Inhabitants rendered every ordinary Remedy to these Evils ineffectual.

Para. 22. In order to put a Stop to these Abuses and at the same time to fulfil the Expectations of our Employers, as mentioned in your Commands of March 1770, we determined on farming out the Salt Lands on a Plan similar to that we have adopted for the rest of the province on Leases for five years

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

and at an annual Increase of quantity. The same causes which induced us to extend the Leases of the Lands to that term operated equally in the present Instance, the Principle of both being the same. We confined the Manufacture of the Salt entirely to these Farmers who from Motives of Interest will be led to attend to the Ease of the Inhabitants and the Improvement of this Commodity. . . .

Para. 23. The whole of the Salt in Bengal thus engaged to be delivered during the Course of the present Year amounts to 26 lacs of Maunds, the Duty upon which at 30 rupees p. 100 Maunds will be R. 7 lacs and 80 thousand.

Para. 24. Our next Object was to dispose of the Salt by an Annual Sale, and Advertisements were published for the Disposal of the Salt of the 24 Pergunnahs (the other Farms not being so forward) in Lots not exceeding 50 thousand Maunds, which Limit we thought it prudent to make in order to prevent too large a Quantity being engrossed in the Hands of one Person. Some sealed Proposals were in consequence delivered in, but they were so few in number and in the Terms so much below our Expectations, that we did not hesitate to reject them. . . .

Para. 27. It affords us particular Satisfaction to observe that whilst a large Source of Advantage is thus opened to the Company the Value of this Necessary of Life is not enhanced to the poor Inhabitants; and the Price of Salt, so far from having rose in consequence of these Regulations, is even lower than when the Manufacture of it was open to every Individual.

Para. 28. As Simplicity is the first Object in all our Arrangements we have formed this Plan in such a manner that the Farmer and Purchaser are mutual Checks upon each other, and thus the Establishment of Agents and the Stationing of Custom House Officers to prevent embezzlements becomes unnecessary. The Merchant's receipt to the Farmer ascertains at once the Quantity made and delivered by the latter to the former. The Merchant having once paid the Price of the Salt, including the Duty, will transport it without molestation to any part of the Provinces, and in lieu of deriving his Profits from Oppression or Collusion will now find it in the free Vend of his Commodity.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

## No. 12. *Failure to sell the Salt.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xi, p. 450; Revenue Department Letter.

March 25, 1773.

Whether this Plan has proved a Discouragement to those who might wish to be the Purchasers of Salt, by confining it to Men of great Property, or the Rates have been fixed too high, no Proposals have yet been made, and We have found ourselves under the Necessity of resuming the Subject and making a fresh Publication on new Terms. It was accordingly resolved in our Consultations of the 23rd Instant to put up the whole Salt at Public Outcry on the 1st of May next in Lots of 10,000 Maunds each. . . . The Smallness of the Lots, and our requiring an Advance of only 25 % instead of 75 as was before proposed, will diffuse the Trade more generally amongst all the Merchants in the Country, and by increasing the Number of Purchasers procure more advantageous Terms. From the Profits of the Sale, together with the Duties upon Betle-nut and Tobacco, We propose securing a Revenue of £120,000 to the Company, agreeably to your Expectations, and we mean to set apart the Overplus as a Fund for the Discharge of just Balances that may be due to private Merchants.

## No. 13. '*My own Salt Plan.*'

British Museum Add. MS. 29218.

[This document is in Hastings's handwriting and undated. It cannot have been written before the creation of the Provincial Councils, November 1773. The following is a summary.]

1. A Board of Salt.
2. To form a Board of Customs.
3. To correspond with the Provincial Councils.
4. The Provincial Councils to make advances, decide disputes, and appoint checks.
5. The Provincial Councils shall keep separate Proceedings and send them monthly.
6. The Board of Salt shall make Contracts, issue all orders, and have the entire control.
7. The Contractors shall agree to the following conditions:
8. A bounty on the surplus Salt, at the market price.
9. A penalty on deficient Salt, at the market price.
10. The Hidgely and Farmer to be called on to agree to these conditions.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

11. Ayouts to be recalled.

12. The duty to remain, the land rent abolished.

13. Secreted or smuggled Salt to be seized and confiscated by the authority of the Provincial Councils—Salt seized to be the captor's.

14. Salt to be lodged in the Golajaut, as a penalty for deficient quantities.

15. The sales to be made annually on the 1st Cawn, a Coot to be made one month before by the Provincial Councils and a second Coot in the presence of the Contractor's agents on the day of the sale that the Board may provide for deficiencies.

16. 1. 25 % of the Purchase shall be made with delivery after the sale.

2. Clearance to be made in 3 months.

3. The purchaser shall receive an order of delivery and a certificate of duties paid.

4. The lot weighed off 2 months after the order of delivery or sold at the risk of the 1st purchaser and a fresh deposit taken from the 2nd.

17. The Contractor to pay for deficient lots at the price of sale and expenses.

18. A Custom House Officer to attend each delivery and endorse the Rowannah.

19. Contractor's account to be adjusted one month after the delivery.

20. Customs appropriated to make advances.

21. The Contractors to draw for advances.

22. Accounts to be kept:

1. Treasury of accounts.
2. Account current with each Contractor.
3. Account current with each District.
4. Account current with Bengal Salt.

Two Modes of delivery offered:

1. At the Golajaut.
2. To transfer it to Calcutta, Dacca, etc.

## No. 14. *Opium Monopoly.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xii, p. 225.

December 31, 1773.

Para. 16. The President on his return from Patna referred to our consideration the circumstance of the Opium Trade in that Province. It was found to have been carried on for many years as a monopoly, and however paradoxical such an

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

assertion may seem to those who are not fully acquainted with the subject it clearly appeared to us, upon a minute investigation, that an attempt to lay it open to all persons indiscriminately as a free and uninfluenced trade, instead of being beneficial to the cultivator and useful to these Provinces, would be productive of consequences the very reverse. We therefore deemed it most advisable to farm it out on the Company's account, reserving for the Dutch the quantity they had usually received. We have accordingly farmed it to Mir Muneer and Ramchurn Pundit, who had before the management of this business under the Factory at Patna. We have prohibited all other persons under our protection from interfering with it and we have determined to sell it by public auction for the benefit of the Company.

Para. 17. The profit arising from this sale will we believe prove a more than sufficient fund for the payment of the allowance fixed for the Members of our Board, as explained at large in our Proceedings.

## No. 15. *Bank.*

British Museum Add. MS. 29207, Supreme Council of Revenue [no copy in India Office].

March 25, 1773.

Many letters from the Collectors now lying before the Board and requiring instructions concerning the batta to be charged on the several species of rupees received from the Zemindars and Farmers in payment of the public revenues and also concerning the mode of remitting the same to the Presidency.

The President now lays before the Board the following proposals relative to both these subjects, which he submits to their consideration as the only expedient which has occurred to him for bringing the revenue into the Treasury of the Hon. Company without injuring the circulation of specie, at the same time insuring the Government the full value of the rupees received in payment of the rents, and furnishing the merchants with the means of making remittances to the Aurungs without the hazard and expense to which both the revenue and trade of the country are exposed by remittances made to and from the different parts of it in specie.

He is informed that the great complaints which are made from all the northern districts of the 2 provinces of the inability of the farmers to pay their rents on account of the uncommon plenty and cheapness of grain, are primarily owing to the great drains which have been made of the current coin

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

in the districts by the Collections, which for some years past have centred in the public Treasuries of the City of Moorshedabad and at the Presidency and to the want of an equal trade to carry it back again into circulation.

To provide an effectual remedy to this growing evil must be the work of mature experience and a course of years and can never be thoroughly accomplished until that freedom of trade which the Company have so earnestly recommended can be established, by removing the obstructions which have occasioned its present stagnation, and opening new channels for the wealth of other countries to flow as formerly into Bengal, what is now proposed he can only recommend as a palliative, as a temporary expedient, but he hopes that it may prove hereafter an essential aid to every future measure which may be adopted for completing the desired ends, which can never be fully attained while the Government is under the necessity of conveying its wealth in loads from the most remote parts of the province with the destructive parade of military escorts; or while the merchant has no other means of purchasing the manufactures and productions of the Country but that of conveying the same wealth with an insupportable expense of boats, peons, burcardasses, and travelling agents, and exposed to the greatest perils from decoits, accidents to which their boats are for ever liable in the way from secret embezzlements and the treachery of those to whose charge it is committed: . . .

Regulation 1. That a principal house or Bank, under the conduct of one or more responsible Shroffs, be established at the Presidency through which all remittances of revenue shall be made from the districts of the province, and an inferior house, under the charge of one or more Gomastahs, dependent on the principal in each district or collectorship.

Regulation 2. That the Collectors shall not exchange the rupees which they receive in the payment of their collections, but shall pay them to the Shroffs or Gomastahs of the House established in their districts, in the same species in which they were received, taking their bills on the capital house. . . .

Regulation 4. . . . All merchants and others who may have dealings in the country shall have liberty to make the remittances to the Aurungs through the Channel of the said Bank. . . .

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

# CHAPTER VIII

## THE LAND SETTLEMENT

**Problem of tenures—Revenue Committee of Circuit—Five Years' Lease System—Revenue Boards removed—Supervisors reduced to Collectors—Increase of arrears—Plan of 1775 to extend leases—Aumenee assessment of 1777—Value of these experiments.**

THE most urgent and important reform was that of the Land Settlement, or appointment of those who should be responsible for the revenues, for it formed the basis of the administrative system, carrying with it judicial functions and determining the economic situation of the mass of the people as well as that of the magnates. The problem that presented itself was complicated and obscure. As John Shore said later: 'There it was, so many square miles of noble country, yielding all sorts of produce and a revenue of two millions; but in whom the rightful ownership of all those broad beegahs was vested, we knew no more than we did of the landed property of the moon.' As a matter of fact it was the absence of any 'rightful ownership' that was at the root of the matter: 'property in land' in the English sense could hardly be said to exist in India. Under these circumstances whatever system the Calcutta Council might decree could be regarded only as an experiment.[1]

Since the Company had received the grant of the Diwani, two methods had been tried of making the yearly Settlement. At first the old native practice of holding a Poonah or assembly for the settlement at Murshidabad, to which all renters of lands were summoned, was continued by Mohamed Reza Khan and Francis Sykes. Then in 1770 the supervisors were empowered to make the settlement in their own districts, in order to save the Zemindars from the expense of attendance at the capital. But this gave dangerous power into the hands of

[1] Kaye, *The Administration of the East India Company*, p. 168.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

the supervisors, and it was recognized in 1772 that before all else their authority must be reduced and put under control. Hastings's views travelled beyond the requirements of the yearly account, and he determined[1] to make a thorough investigation and a new assessment which should serve as a basis for a permanent system of land-rents. The only machinery in existence for such work was the Calcutta Revenue Board created in 1771 to control and co-ordinate that of the older Revenue Boards of Murshidabad, Patna, and Dacca. It was Hastings's aim to strengthen the central authority and remove the conflicting local courts. With this in view he induced the Revenue Board at Calcutta to dispatch a Committee, consisting of four of its members, Messrs. Middleton, Dacres, Lawrell, and Graham, on an 'iter' to see and settle the districts lying east of the Ganges, while the remaining members under Mr. Aldersey dealt with the districts lying about Calcutta and to the west. The Province of Bihar was not included in this survey, as it had been more recently settled.

The first experiment to be tried, and that on which all later ones were founded, was the five years lease system. This was decided upon on May 14, 1772,[2] as a result of the inquiries Hastings had been making since his arrival. 'The farming system for a course of years, subject to proper checks and regulations,' seemed to him, as it had to Becher in 1769, 'to be the most likely to afford relief to the country and both to ascertain and produce the real value of the lands without violence to the ryots.'[3] It was the more necessary to proceed at once to a settlement because the famine of 1770 had left an extraordinary scene of distress and many waste lands. Reports to the Directors spoke of indescribable mortality and beggary. In Purneah and Bhirbhum the country was returning to jungle for want of inhabitants, where formerly there had been 1,000 villages. Some of the rajas were ruined and others imprisoned for arrears of rents. Estimates of the loss of life went as high as one-half and one-third—Hastings's own

[1] *Vide* Proposed Regulations, Nos. 6 and 12, pp. 156, 159.

[2] *Calcutta Committee of Revenue Consultations*, 2, Range 67, vol. 54.

[3] *Bengal Secret Consultations*, vol. ix, May 24, 1769.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

account—though the real average for the Province was probably nearer one-sixth. The effect of these natural causes of distress among the peasantry was enhanced by the artificial one of the Najay cess,[1] a levy made upon the living inhabitants of a village to supply the loss to the revenues of the rents of the dead. It was an old practice, but its effect was to cause the few remaining ryots in a depopulated village to take to flight rather than face the extortion.

In a letter of November 3, 1772, to the Court of Directors, Hastings described the need for a new settlement as crying.

'Though 7 years had elapsed since the Company became possessed of the Dewanni, yet no regular process had ever been formed for conducting the business of the Revenue and this depended on the land-settlement. Every Zemindari and every Taaluk was left to its own particular customs. These indeed were not inviolably adhered to; the novelty of the business to those who were appointed to superintend it, the chicanery of the people whom they were obliged to employ as their agents, the accidental exigencies of each district, and not unfrequently the just discernment of the Collector occasioned many changes. Every change added to the confusion which involved the whole and few were either authorised or known by the presiding members of the Government.'[2]

The Calcutta Board of Revenue met on May 14, 1772, to initiate the new Settlement. They appointed the Committee of Circuit to deal with the eastern districts, and laid down the two main principles on which its work was to be conducted, 'to farm the lands and on long leases'. Their reasons are given in a valuable minute.[3] They further passed twenty-four resolutions for the Committee's guidance (*vide* p. 274), which pointed out the chief measures to be taken, though leaving much to their discretion. To make a satisfactory assessment it would have been necessary first to ascertain the right of every cultivator to the land he tilled, and secondly to assign the collection of his rent to a responsible authority. But there were no trustworthy records from which such rights could be estimated, nor was the evidence of living

[1] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. iv, p. 300.
[2] *Bengal Letters*, vol. xi, p. 78.
[3] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. iv, p. 300; also p. 266.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

witnesses to be relied on. The most scrupulous and prolonged inquiries could not have avoided unjust awards, while the matter was of the utmost urgency and admitted of no delay. For these reasons Hastings postponed his inquest into the cultivators' rights, sanctioned the accepted and existing *status quo*, and directed the operations of the Committee to securing an equitable collection of the taxes and a ready and impartial justice in the determining of property disputes. The five-year leases would gradually display the actual value of the lands, and when once a trustworthy judicial system should be restored it would become possible to investigate the cultivator's tenure.

The work of 1772 is practically summed up in the two epoch-making promulgations, the Settlement Resolutions of the Board of Revenue (p. 274) and the Plan of Justice issued by the Committee of Circuit.[1] The most interesting of the Settlement Resolutions are Nos. 6, 9, 12, 16, 18, and 21. The change of the title of supervisors implied a real restriction of their dangerous local supremacy. Hastings thus expressed his reasons for it: 'As the business of the agents is solely to superintend and collect the Revenue they can only be properly stiled collectors . . . so much depends on the just application of names that we urge this alteration with a thorough conviction both of its utility and necessity.' His real aims and the reason for this guarded language in addressing the Directors on the subject are revealed in an intimate letter to Mr. Dupré on January 6, 1773: 'They were originally what the word supervisor imports, simple *lookers-on* without trust or authority. They became *collectors* and ceased to be *lookers-on*; but though this change had taken place two years before I arrived, yet I found to my astonishment that they were known to the Court of Directors only in their original character. It was necessary to undeceive the Company. It was once intended to withdraw the collectors entirely. They monopolize the trade of the Country. . . . These perquisites I believe to be an oppression on the people and an obstruction of the Revenue. They are most of them

[1] *Committee of Circuit*, vol. i, p. 181.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

the agents of their own banyans, and they are devils. And as the collectorships are more lucrative than any posts in the Service (the Government itself not excepted) we cannot get a man of abilities to conduct the official business: for who would rest satisfied with a handsome salary of 3,000 or 4,000 rupees a year to maintain him in Calcutta, who could get a lack or three lacks and live at no expense in the districts? But . . . there were among them so many sons, cousins, or *élèves* of Directors and intimates of the members of the Council that it was better to let them remain than to provoke an army of opponents against every act of Administration. They continue, but their power is retrenched: and the way is paved for their gradual removal.' [1]

Henceforth the collector was to be strictly accountable to the Revenue Board, his decrees only valid under the Company's seal, which the boldest would hardly dare to use for purposes of extortion on his own account; the Diwan and Mohir [2] would act as checks upon him, and the removal of the Pargana sepoys deprive him of his former weapons of offence. He was strictly forbidden to make loans or to deal in grain, and had Hastings had his way this prohibition would have been extended to all the necessaries of life. His agents were debarred from being rent-farmers or usurers; in compensation for these restrictions the collector was entrusted with the whole responsibility and honour of administering justice and forwarding the welfare of his district. Unable to secure the removal of these collectors, Hastings thus adopted the fine alternative of calling out their best powers and spurring the sense of honour which he gladly admitted to be latent in them, by making them the mainsprings of his new system. In 1774 they began to be superseded by the institution of the Provincial Councils, and their removal was provided for in the Plan of Permanent Revenue Reform then drafted and put into practice in 1781. The next most important reform was the removal of the Zemindari chokeys; but the attempt to lessen usury was a task of greater difficulty and met with less success.

In the actual leasing of the lands, begun at Kishenagur

[1] Gleig, vol. i, p. 268.

[2] *Vide* p. 274. 15.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

in June, the first question was how to deal with those of hereditary holders, such as Zemindars or Talukdars. The lands might either be let to new rent-farmers who should make an allowance out of their profits to the former holders, or the Zemindars themselves might be retained. The latter alternative was preferred for many reasons: it was more equitable; cheaper in the collection; it would retain on the land men of local influence and traditional authority over the ryots; it was in closer accord than the other with the directions from England; and finally it was much the more secure. These Zemindars were for the most part men attached to their farms, who would not abscond so long as any possibility remained of meeting their engagements. The Company would also have a further hold over them in the threat of reducing them to the status of ordinary tax-farmers. Yet the proposals made by these men in response to the first invitation of the Committee were so vague, of such low amounts, and so disadvantageous to the Company, that partial recourse to the other mode became unavoidable, and a compromise was the result. Some of the lands held by Zemindars and Talukdars who were ready to give good terms for them were at once granted to the former holders; others, for which no sufficient sum was offered, were put up to public auction. This induced others of the hereditary holders to bid high enough to secure their lands; the rest either passed into fresh hands or remained in the Company's control, and were managed by the Revenue servants on the same conditions as the ancient Khas or Government lands.

The redistribution involved the Committee in the troublesome business of forming a new Hustabud or schedule of taxes. Little was retained beside the ground-rent proper; the 'Najay' was abolished as being a notoriously oppressive expedient, the 'Haldarry' or tax on marriages was obviously false economy where labourers were in such request, the 'Bazee Jumma', or fines for petty offences, opened the door to bribery; all these were ended. New 'Pottahs' or cultivators' leases and 'Amulnamas' or tax-farmers' agreements were issued. The ryot's pottah ran as follows:

'For the Jumma and ground that you hold in the village of

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

X a pottah for the present year is now made out and given to you, containing the different rates, as specified underneath, which you are to pay and no more. No demand of Mhatoote, Puncheek, or Dereenck will be made upon you. The Haldarry upon marriages and Baxee Jumma of the Sudder have also been remitted; these you will not have to pay. Whatever you was before in possession of, and the ground together with the trees upon it, which before belonged to you, that you are now to keep possession of, and exerting yourself towards cultivation, pay your rent agreeable to the Kistbundy.'[1] For the Bengal year 1179 [1772–3].

An annually increasing scale of rents was demanded from all who accepted the office of tax-farmer, as it was to be expected that the longer leases would enable their holders to improve the lands. Not only the collectors and their banyans were debarred from holding farms, but no European was to be permitted directly or indirectly to rent lands in any part of the country. Henceforth the English were to be confined to their proper functions of developing the external commerce and undertaking the cares of the Government.

The new regulations had been framed to obviate the need for local Revenue Councils, and on September 8, 1772, the Revenue Council at Murshidabad consequently dissolved itself, that at Patna being also abolished in this year,[2] and the collections put under the management of the Supreme Government at Calcutta with no other intermediaries than the collectors themselves. The old arrangement had caused constant delays of justice while doubtful cases of disputed ownership were being referred to Calcutta and back; but in addition to this there was a purely political reason. Murshidabad was the Nawab's seat, and since his power was to be annulled it was not advisable that his capital should continue to be the centre of authority in such matters, nor was so ill-fortified a city a secure hold for treasure in view of Maratha threats.

While satisfied that to farm the lands on long leases was the best method of settlement, the Committee of Circuit recognized its imperfections, saying, 'Any mode of agency is liable to incertainty and embezzlements', and confessing 'We own we

[1] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. iv, p. 319.
[2] *I. O. Records*, Range 2. 1, p. 640.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

foresee many difficulties and impediments, which we hope will only affect ourselves in the additional labour which it will require to remove them'; but on any other system they held that the business, 'already so great that much is unavoidably neglected, would be rendered so voluminous that nothing would be duly attended to, arrears would accrue, and authority be set at nought and the power it must delegate abused'. They were therefore unanimous in supporting Hastings's proposals. The fiscal results of this first experiment are well known to have been disappointing, and in 1774 the collections were still low in amount, and Hastings's expectation that imperfections and miscalculations inevitable in such experiments would be made to redound to his discredit was amply fulfilled. The heavy arrears of Zemindars, who in their anxiety to retain their hereditary lands had engaged for sums beyond their power to raise in an ordinary season, made an excellent stick to beat him with, and Philip Francis—when he came out—lost not a day in laying hold of it. But having foreseen this, Hastings was forearmed and did not allow the hostile criticism of inexperienced men to shake the matured growth of his convictions; he pursued his measures steadily and gave much time in the Revenue Council to the investigation of the vexed problems of tenure.[1]

Hastings's reforming influence had already begun to be felt by those in the service. John Shore, afterwards himself Governor-General, was at this time a junior servant. In a letter home dated April 1, 1772, written from Murshidabad, he says, 'The road to opulence grows daily narrower, and is more crowded with competitors. . . . The Court of Directors are actuated with such a spirit of reformation and retrenchment, and so well seconded by Mr. Hastings, that it seems the rescission of all our remaining emoluments will alone suffice it. The Company's service is in fact rendered an employ not very desirable.'[2] And Hastings himself was not unconscious of the effect produced. What he wrote in 1781 applies with scarcely less force to 1772: 'What a world of enemies have I sub-

[1] Forrest, *Selections from the Dispatches*, vol. i, pp. 139, 359, &c.
[2] *Life of Lord Teignmouth*, vol. i, p. 35.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

mitted to the hazard of creating by disregard of personal consequences. In this establishment I have deprived the bulk of both civil and military servants of their settled means of acquiring rapid fortunes . . . the most important acts of this Government are constituted on principles diametrically opposite to popularity and established opinions.' Is it necessary to look farther than these retrenchments and the lowered receipts from investments and revenues to account for the subsequent persecution of this great administrator? He deliberately forwent the approval of his countrymen in the determination to raise the condition of the native; but the standards of conduct which he then planted have become the tradition of generations of Anglo-Indian servants.

The proceedings of the President and Revenue Council in 1774–5 are not included in the report of revenue matters made by the House of Commons Committee, but they were not without result. Hastings and Barwell, working now in complete accord—for Barwell had realized the unique experience and ability of Hastings—drew up a new Plan for a Settlement, which they dispatched to England on April 22, 1775.[1] It has been little regarded by historians, and unfortunately it did not take effect; for the Directors, despite the many warnings contained in reports from Bengal, preferred the pernicious system of annual leases, advocated by Francis. The Plan is, however, interesting. Mr. Beveridge has discussed it in detail, and observes very justly that it embodies the matured views of the man best versed in Indian affairs.[2] It was published in a pamphlet on the Revenues of Bengal by Francis, with his own alternative scheme, which offers an instructive contrast both in style and matter. Hastings had already invited the majority to form such a scheme and they had confessed themselves unable: 'At this moment we should be very much embarrassed if we were called upon to make a new settlement of the lands.' Yet Francis soon made the attempt, and based it upon the erroneous principle that Zemindars were owners of the land and that it should be confirmed to them in perpetuity. What little he knew of the subject he had

[1] *Vide* p. 280. [2] Beveridge, *History of India*, vol. ii, p. 418.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

learned since his arrival in India from John Shore, and when the latter fell ill, Philip Francis, to Hastings's amusement, fell silent, until his recovery.

The importance of this Plan of 1775 is that it retains and so sanctions some of the most disputed characteristics of the first experiment—sale by auction, namely, and the principle of long leases, here greatly extended. So much so indeed that Beveridge appears to consider it a plan for a permanent tenure. 'It furnishes', he says, 'the outline of a permanent settlement, and these leases, though said to be for life, were meant for perpetuity, as it was provided that possession should, on the death of the party holding it, devolve to his heirs.' This, however, as we have seen, was simply a return to the old rule of Zemindari inheritance, which had obtained under native rule. It was very far removed from the error of making the Zemindar the freehold owner of lands from which he had really only the right of collecting the dues. In this Plan, therefore, while he ensured stability by granting leases for two lives—practically the same thing as the modern rule of thirty years' tenancy—he took care to avoid the dangers of rigidity of tenure, and insisted upon the Government's right to dispossess defaulting Zemindars, as the essential stipulation without which they would constantly fail in their engagements. The arguments on which the Plan is based are also to be found in summary form in a minute of the Government.[1]

Whatever the upshot might be, whatever the plan the Directors might see fit to approve, any new settlement must, like its predecessor, be based on a thorough inquiry into the existing values of the lands. Although the authorities at home might imagine that the valuations of 1772 should still hold good, Hastings knew from the collectors' reports that many causes had contributed greatly to alter them. He was therefore anxious to see this work begun in time. In March 1776 he wrote as follows to Sulivan: 'The 5 years' settlement expires in March 1777. Many previous arrangements ought to be made some time before the new settlement takes place.

[1] Forrest, *Selections from State Papers*, vol. ii, p. 526.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

I would, had I power, begin them now.' In July, in a letter to Macleane, he says;

'The worst consequences may be apprehended both to the Company and to the country from a new settlement, formed under all the prejudices, and accommodated to all the objects of a faction. *Even now* every power of Government would be required to restore it to order. A few months hence may involve it in such distraction as may hazard the loss of the whole.'[1]

The controversy started by Francis in the Calcutta Council was then at its height, General Clavering claiming the Presidential authority on account of Hastings's conditional resignation, which the latter had withdrawn. Hastings was in a minority, and therefore impotent, but on September 25, Monson, one of his three opponents, died, and he recovered his proper authority. Nevertheless he still refrained from using it to push on all the measures he had at heart, lest if he were removed in the course of them confusion might be only worse confounded. And yet at this very time Francis wrote: 'He has got the reins and is driving furiously.' But this matter of the Settlement was an exception. The work of preparation for it would introduce no risk of disturbances, even were it interrupted by his recall. He took his opportunity, created a new office, called the Aumenee, for investigating the rents and rights in the land, and by November 22, 1777, had obtained clear accounts of every district except part of Rajshahi, and could comfort himself with the conviction that this would ensure his 'being remembered with lasting credit' by the people, however misjudged at home. It is to this he alludes in his letter to Stewart of December 21, 1776:

'I have begun measures which belong only to a fixed and permanent government, and shall go on piano, piano, to others as necessity or occasion shall throw them in my way. I collect materials for future application which will be of use to me if I remain, which any new rulers will be glad to find ready for their use, and which, if General Clavering is to have the rule, he may totally reject or adopt my plan if he pleases, just as if he had lain idle or asleep in the interval. . . . But

[1] Gleig, vol. ii, pp. 38–47.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

in spite of rancour, obstinacy, and ignorance yet more gross than his, he would find himself, in that case even, compelled, by their incontestable utility, to employ them.' [1]

Hastings himself retained the office; unhappily, however, his opponents were predominant at home, and the Court of Directors sent out orders forbidding the long leases and so sacrificing the 'remote consequences' which in Hastings's view counted for so much, in order that they might secure a possible immediate gain through annual leases, ignoring their ruinous effect on the cultivator and his land.

Yet, although for the moment despised, Hastings's Plan had exposed the bed-rock principle for a permanent and enduring method of tenures, and laid the foundation for it in ascertaining more closely the worth of each holding, and John Shore, working under him, was coming to recognize the soundness of his statesmanship. Through this man, the adviser of Lord Cornwallis and afterwards Governor, the great Proconsul's principles were asserted, so that the 'incontestable utility' which Hastings claimed for his experiments has been fully proved and made available for the spreading requirements of our Indian Empire.

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VIII

### No. 1.

*Calcutta Committee of Revenue Consultations*, 2, Range 67, vol. 54.

May 14, 1772.

There is no doubt that the mode of letting the Lands in farm is in every respect the most eligible. It is the most simple and therefore the best adapted to a Government constituted like that of the Company, which cannot enter into the detail and minutiae of the Collections. Any mode of agency by which the rents might be received is liable to incertainty, to perplexed and inextricable accounts, to an infinity of little balances and to embezzlements. In a word both the interest of the State and the property of the people must be at the mercy of the agents. Nor is it an object of trivial consideration that the business of the service, already so great that

[1] Gleig, vol. ii, p. 121.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

much of it is unavoidably neglected, would be thereby rendered so voluminous, and the attention of the Board so divided that nothing would be duly attended to. The current affairs would fall into irrecoverable arrears; the resolutions upon them be precipitate and desultory; the authority of Government set at nought, the Power which it must necessarily delegate to others would be abused, and the most pernicious consequences ensue from the impossibility of finding time to examine and correct them.

That such would be the case we with confidence affirm, because we already experience the existence of these evils in part from the great increase of affairs which has devolved to the charge of this Government, and the want of a reduced system, no less than from a want of immediate inspection and execution. This is a point well worth the attention of the Board in every proposition that may come before them, as it essentially respects the constitution and general interests of the Company.

To let the lands for long leases is a necessary consequence of letting them; the Farmer who holds his farm for one year only, having no interest in the next, takes what he can with the hand of rigor, which in the execution of legal claims is often equivalent to violence; he is under the necessity of being rigid and even cruel, for what is left in arrear after the expiration of his power is at best a doubtful debt, if ever recoverable. He will be tempted to exceed the bounds of right and to augment his income by irregular exactions and by racking the tenants, for which excuses will not be wanting where the farms pass annually from one hand to another. What should hinder him? He has nothing to lose by the desertion of the inhabitants or the decay of cultivation. Some of the richest articles of tillage require a length of time to come to perfection; the ground must be manured, banked, watered, ploughed and sowed or planted. Those operations are begun in one season and cost a heavy expence which is to be repaid by the crops of the ensuing year. What Farmer will give either encouragement or assistance to a culture of which another is to reap the fruits?

The discouragements which the tenants feel from being transferred every year to new landlords are a great objection to short leases. They contribute to injure the cultivation and dispeople the lands. They deprive the industrious reiat of those aids, known by the name of 'Tuccaubee', so essentially necessary to enable him to purchase cattle, seed, and utensils of husbandry, which a more permanent farmer will ever find it in his interest to supply as a means of promoting an

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

encreased cultivation, and they of course prove an insurmountable obstacle to bringing into an arable state the immense tracts of waste lands which overspread this fertile country.

The defects of short leases point out as a necessary consequence the opposite advantages of long farms. From these the farmer acquires a permanent interest in his lands. He will for his own sake lay out money in assisting his tenants, in improving lands already cultivated, and in clearing and cultivating waste lands. He will not dare to injure the rents, nor encroach in one year on the profits of the next, because the future loss which must ensue from such a proceeding will be his own. The tenants will grow familiarised to his authority and a mutual attachment is at least more likely to proceed from a long intercourse between them, especially when their interests are mutually blended, than from a new and transitory connection which is ready to expire before it can grow into acquaintance. Such are the arguments which have occurred to us in support of the two points on which we have already determined, namely *to dispose of the Lands to farm and on long leases.*

No. 2. *Separate Regulations* [*enclosed in letter to Colebrooke*].

Sent on March 26, 1772, cf. p. 148.

British Museum Add. MS. 29127, p. 20.

[This is of interest as forming the rough draft on which the Settlement Resolutions were based, and also the Plan of Justice. The notes on each important regulation are Hastings's own, corresponding with the aims of the Proposed Regulations, but advancing a stage nearer to practical realization. They should be compared with the Settlement Resolutions, which betray certain modifications of aim.]

1. That the Lands of the Provinces shall be lett out to farm for the term of six years.

The reason for assigning this term is that the crops continually vary in the same place, taking their rotation in 3 years; as the rents vary with them, the leases should be for 3, or 6, or 9 years.

2. That orders shall be sent to the Collectors to advertise for sealed proposals from such as are willing to take farms, the proposals to be sent to the Presidency, and the grants of the leases to be issued from thence.

3. That orders be sent to the Collectors to send to the Presidency copies of the Jumma-wausil-Baukee (i.e. Annual Account of the Settlements, payments of Balances) of each pergunnah, distinguishing the Farms or other Divisions and

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

inserting the Names of the Farmers, Shicdars, or others who had charge of each, for the last three Years.

4. That the Zemidar of every District shall be restored to his authority but dependent on the Collector, that all Bundabusts [Settlements of the Rents] not determined by the Board shall be made by him. That the Collections shall be received by him jointly with the Collectors. That he shall keep separate Accounts of the Collections according to the established Forms of the Country, countersign all Receipts and all Accounts transmitted to the Board of Revenue or Presidency by the Collector.

5. But that as the Zemidar from Nonage or other incapacity may not himself be able to attend to the Business of the Cucherry, in such case a fixed Dewan shall be appointed who shall act in his stead.

The two preceding Regulations, which may be regarded as one, are meant to prevent a confusion in accounts by the change of the Collectors, and to put it in the power of the Zemidar to prevent the abuses of the authority of the Collector. The Zemidar having a perpetual and hereditary interest in the Country and the people being in general attached to him, he is the natural guardian of their rights, and is less likely to oppress them, or injure his Zemidarree than any temporary ruler, though an Englishman, because it is his own.

6. That neither the Collector nor Zemidar shall send Peons, Seepoys, or other persons with authority into the Lands belonging to the Farmers, excepting only on such occasions as shall indispensably require it for the Maintenance of the Peace, or the Execution of Justice, in which the authority of the Farmer shall be insufficient. And that on such occasions a Warrant under the Seal of the Collector shall be given in writing to the Officer or Persons employed, and be recorded in the judicial proceedings with the reasons for issuing it.

7. That the Collector be forbidden on pain of dismission from the Service to be concerned directly or indirectly in the purchase or sale of Grain.

This is a very gentle and partial Restriction and ought to extend to *all* the Necessaries of Life. Of all monopolies these are the most pernicious, and whatever the Collector, the Lord of the Country trades in will be a monopoly.

8. That no Banyan, Mutteseddie, or other Servants of whatever Denomination, of the Collector be allowed to farm lands; nor directly or indirectly to hold any Concern in any Farm, nor to be security for any Farmer. That the Collector be strictly enjoined to prevent such practices; and that if it shall be discovered that any one under a false name, or any Kind of collusion, hath found means to evade this order, he shall be subject to a heavy Fine proportionate to the amount of the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Farm and that the Farm shall be relett or made Causs, [i.e. taken into the immediate charge of the Government].

There are two valid and obvious reasons for this Regulation; the farms will always be lett greatly under their real value if they are farmed by those whose duty it is to ascertain their value, and what man will be so bold as to offer himself a competitor with the minister of the Lord of the Country?

9. That the farmer shall not receive larger rents from the reiats [tenants] than the Settled Malguzarry [i.e. the Amount stipulated in the Lease].

10. That all Assessments under the name of Muttaoot shall be wholly and for ever abolished, nor shall any Mangun or free Gift be taken but by the *free* consent of every Individual contributing to it.

Muttaoot is a general Name for all Assessments on the Tenants for particular Occasions. These have formerly multiplied to a great List of oppressive Exactions. They are now Collected in most places by the Farmer and form a part of the Malguzzarree. They should for ever continue under one Head and one Collector and the Rule should be universal, For the Farmer cannot be certain of receiving his Rents if other Taxes are arbitrarily levied, and by other hands, from his Tenants, which is the Practice with the Muttaoot.

11. That no man of whatever Rank or Authority shall cut down Trees or Bamboos nor take anything by Force from the inhabitants without their freewill or Consent though paying the full price for the same.

12. That Proclamations shall be made prohibiting all persons from lending money to the Zemidars, Talukdars, Farmers, or any other officer of the Revenue. That the Collector be enjoined to reject all Applications for the Recovery of such Loans, and that any man using Violence or Intimidation to enforce payment of a Debt so contracted shall be severely punished.

13. But that this Regulation shall not extend to Debts contracted before the Publication of it: that all old Debts shall be claimed within the space of six months by application to the public Cucherry, and settled with the allowance of a reasonable Interest and a Kistbundee (or instalment) fixed for payment without any addition of interest, the Kists (or Periods) to be regulated by the ability of the Debtor. That the Collector and Zemidar shall settle the debts of the Farmer or the officers or dependents of the Zemidarree and the Collector those of the Zemidar: and that all Zemidaree debts not claimed within the limited time of six months from the publication of this order shall be cancelled.

The only Losers by this Regulation will be the Money Lenders.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

The Proceedings of the Court Martial on Capt. Mackenzie and the other Enquiries made on that Occasion may serve to shew how necessary it is to free the Land from the Evils of Usury and accumulated Interest, which is rarely less than 3 and often as high as 15 % *per Mensum*, which with Monthly Accumulations and Fees to Agents, Banyans, Peons and Seepoys may amount to 200 % p.a. Every Rupee thus squeezed from the People is in effect taken from the Government, which can receive from the People no more than they have to give. To fix the Rate of Interest is impossible, because it is to be eluded by a thousand Means. The Lender will give 90 rupees and take a Bond payable in one Month at ½ % Interest for 100; that is, he will lend his Money at more than 11 % and how is this to be proved against him? The only way to abolish the Evils arising from Debts of Usury is to Cancel them altogether, that is, to refuse the aid of Government in recovering them, and leave the Creditor to the Faith of his Debtor—a virtue as rare in the one as Mercy is in the other.

14. That the Pergunnah Seepoys shall be withdrawn and the ancient Establishment of Payks be restored, who shall be subject to the present authority of the Collector.

15. That as it may still be necessary to keep up a Force in some of the Frontier Districts or occasionally to employ Seepoys in the Defence of the Country, or in seizing Robbers, that wherever or whenever it shall be required, Strict Orders shall be given to the Officer Commanding them to prevent the Seepoys from separating from their Corps or committing any kind of disturbance in the Country—and that unless the Service on which they are employed shall particularly require their acting in detached parties, they be kept together in one body and that forts of Tannahs with convenient temporary Quarters be provided at the charge of Government for their accommodation.

[N.B.—Tannahs or Tannadars were officers of a small number of sepoys or land-servants, i.e. police.]

It is sufficient to say in Favor of these Regulations that the Pergunnah Seepoys are a detestable Establishment. They are unfit for military Service. The very Nature of their Employment renders them incapable of Discipline. The Farmers often desire them to be stationed under them, but I can find no other Cause for this Desire than that they may be exempted from the Violences of other Seepoys not stationed with them. The Seepoys are handsomely feed for this Service. They turn Money-lenders, Administrators of Justice, and Judges of property.—They are and must be Plunderers. The Spirit of Avarice and Rapine cannot fail to extend itself to the Brigade Seepoys, for though the Men were not to be transferred from this abominable Corps to the Brigade, yet the latter could not patiently see such Fellows plundering the Country without thinking themselves better entitled to so valuable a Priviledge as being the better Men. And what a School is this for Young English Officers!

In a Word the Contagion must infallibly seize and run through the whole Army unless a Speedy Check be put to it.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

I do not approve of the second Regulation; I only propose it lest the first should be objected to and because we have so large an Establishment already and what (it will be said) shall we do with so many Men bred up to Rapine and let loose in the Country without a Livelihood? they will be worse than Tygers, and what Employ shall be given to the Officers of this Corps? I know not. It may be best to provide against the first Evil by letting them drop off, and to stop recruiting. The last is best prevented by sending no more Cadets to Bengal till they are wanted.

16. That whatever sorts of Rupees shall be paid by the Zemidar or Farmer for the Malguzzarree, shall be sent in kind to the Treasury, and credit given them according to the usual Zemidarree Rates; and that they shall be issued from the Treasury at the Bazar or fixed Exchange.

17. That the Touzee or Book of daily Receipts shall be closed at the end of every Month and a copy thereof be immediately transmitted to the Presidency, as well as to the Board of Revenue.

This will show what Farmers are punctual or deficient in their payments and will serve also to confine the Collector a little to his Duty.

18. That the Collector shall preside in Person in the Administration of Justice, taking to his Assistance the Zemidar or Dewan, with other competent Judges; and that no punishment shall be inflicted but by his Order, and in his Presence.

19. That all Fines and Penalties (Gunnegarries) be registered and brought to the account of the Sircar, but that an appeal be allowed to the Presidency for all Fines exceeding 500 rupees.

The Company have ordered that all Fines shall be abolished. This, I apprehend, cannot be done. Men of a certain Rank cannot be punished with Stripes. The Disgrace in many Instances would be as bad as Death, and affect all the Connections, Relations, and Cast of the Criminals.

No Crimes ought to pass with Impunity. How then are such offenders to be punished but by Fines? Under the proposed Restriction they will not be oppressive.

20. That any person convicted of having received money either for obstructing or facilitating the access to Justice shall be severely and exemplarily punished.

This will not abolish the Practice, but it will lessen it.

21. That a record shall be kept of all criminal Proceedings, with the decisions of the Collector thereon, and a Copy transmitted Monthly to the Sudder Cucherry, which should be removed to the Presidency.

22. That all accusations of Fornication or Adultery and all offences committed against the Laws of the Casts shall be

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

referred to the examination and judgement of the heads of the Cast to which the offender belongs; but the decision of the Cast shall not be carried into execution until confirmed by the Collector.

23. That all disputes between Gentoos respecting inheritance or other matters depending on the particular laws or usages of the Casts be referred to the heads of the Casts, or Arbitrators chosen from the Casts, and their decree to be final.

24. That all disputes between Mussulmen concerning inheritance or other matters for which provision is made by the Mahometan law shall be referred to arbitrators chosen from the Mussulmen, over whom the Cauzee shall always preside, and their decrees shall be final.

25. That all disputes of property for sums not exceeding 10 Rupees shall be decided by the Farmer of the district to which the parties belong, and his decree shall be final.

26. That all disputes for property for sums above 10 Rupees and not exceeding 500 shall be decided by the Collector assisted by the Zemidar or Dewan, and their decree shall be final.

27. That all disputes of property for sums exceeding 500 Rupees shall be decided by the Collector assisted by the Zemidar or Dewan, but that an appeal may lie from his decision to the President and Council, the costs of such (i. e. the maintenance of witnesses and travelling charges of the parties) to be borne by the Party against whom the Cause shall be finally decreed.

28. That all appeals shall be made within 10 days of the decree and reported by the Collector within 10 days after their delivery, and that occasional Committees of the Board shall be appointed to hear and determine them.

29. That all Zemidarree Chokeys shall be abolished, and no chokeys allowed but such as are immediately dependent on the Government under the (*a*) Putchuttera, (*b*) Bucshbunder, and (*c*) Shahbunder. That the Rates of Duties shall be proportioned to the distances of their Destination but fixed, that they shall be levied only at one place and the boats pass unmolested on producing their rowannas or certificates.

a, b, c. These are the names of the Officers of Customs at Moorshidabad, Hougly, Dacca.

**The Zemidaree Chokeys form a part of the Farms and the Farmers extort what they can get from the passengers. It is one of the greatest oppressions in the Country and the greatest obstruction to Trade. But if it is to be removed previous notice should be given that the Farmers may make due allowances for it in their proposals for the Farms.**



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

No. 3. *Summary of the Resolutions for the Settlement of the Lands.*

*Calcutta Committee of Revenue Consultations*, 2, Range 67, vol. 54, p. 251.

May 14, 1772.

1. Farms to be let on leases for 5 years.
2. Farms not to exceed the value of one lack.
3. A Committee of Circuit to be appointed.
4. To consist of Warren Hastings, President.
   S. Middleton.
   P. M. Dacres.
   James Lawrell.
   John Graham.
5. Hougly, Hedgelee, the Calcutta pergunnahs, Burdwan, Midnapore, Birbhum, Bissenpore, and Patcheat to be settled by the rest of the Revenue Board; viz. Messrs. Aldersey, Lane, Barwell, Harris, Goodwin, and Reed.
6. Supervisors to be henceforth known as Collectors.
7. A Dewan to be appointed who shall be joined with the Collector.
8. A public seal of the Company to be used for every transaction.
9. Sepoys not to be employed in the Collections except in urgent cases and by warrant under the public seal.
10. The rents of the ryots to be fixed and not exceeded on pain of the forfeiture of the farmer's lease.
11. The farmers' rents also to be fixed according to the rent-roll of the lease.
12. No Matouts (additional cesses) to be permitted. The existing ones to be scrutinised by the Collectors and abolished if pernicious.
13. Nuzzars and Salamies (gifts) at first interviews to be discontinued.
14. The old farmers to settle the rents in the presence of the new farmer, who is to be responsible for any outstanding balance.
15. A Mohir (accountant) to be appointed to every Farm to note receipt of rents and send monthly accounts to the Collector at the Sudder Cutcherry.
16. Collectors are forbidden to purchase grain on pain of dismissal.
17. No Peshcar, banyan, or other servant of a Collector is to farm any lands.
18. The Committee are to search out means to obviate usury. Collectors and banyans forbidden to lend money;

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

but farmer may lend advance, known as Tuccabee, to the ryot.

19. Kists (rents) are to be payable at the usual periods of harvest.

20. That the Committee may arrange for the safeguarding of the district, the Collector is to prepare an account of the Chakeran Lands (assigned lands for support of land-servants zemindars &c.).

21. All Zemindari chokeys to be abolished except those that 'immediately depend on the Government'.

22. Board of Revenue to issue orders to publish and advertise these changes.

23. Collectors to prepare the rent-roll of each farm arranged in pergunnahs with the charges of collection.

24. Dacca district to receive special treatment by the Committee on account of its great size.

## No. 4. *Obstacles to a true Assessment of Values.*

**Letter of Mr. Lushington, in charge of the Hugli District, to Alexander, Chief of the Council of Revenue at Murshidabad.**

*Calcutta Committee of Revenue Consultations*, 2 (June 1, 1772), Range 67, vol. 54.

December 31, 1771.

Last year I recommended, and you Gentlemen ordered, a measurement of a part of the Lands under my charge. I was sanguine in my hopes that I should not only acquire a true account of the cultivation but of every local peculiarity which could contribute to give a full and particular knowledge of the state of the country.

But I soon experienced that the interest of individuals and the facility of gratifying it with little risk of detection rendered it impossible to succeed. The public and allowed advantages of the person invested with the charge bear no proportion to the illicit ones which he may obtain without much fear of discovery. The gratification of his own avarice concurring with the interest of the man whose lands are to be measured, a corrupt bargain is soon struck and as securely maintained in secrecy by a reciprocal interest in the parties. To increase the appointments of those who are to be employed in this service so as to give reason to expect that the fear of forfeiting would restrain them from transgressions, would make it so expensive to effect a complete measurement that the advantage to be reaped would hardly compensate, especially if it be considered that by farming out these lands, an



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

immediate considerable increase will accrue and a very few years ascertain their true value to the Government. In a well regulated farm, the interest of one individual is set against that of another. It becomes the business of all to enquire into and learn the state of the lands which they propose to rent. They are able to carry on their scrutinies free from suspicion, because their design of being a candidate for farming them is known to themselves only.

The present possessor of a farm will be cautious himself, and direct those under him to be cautious likewise, of giving opportunities for discovering the advantages they reap. But private interest will devise such unsuspected ways of gaining knowledge useful to itself, that the utmost degree of caution will not be able to defeat them. [He therefore recommends farming.]

The Taluckdars of Hugli having been hitherto exempted from all local investigation into the value of their lands, the scrutiny made by me at the end of last year for regulating the new Settlement was deemed a hardship. They flattered themselves that a long-established custom would have availed them equally with a positive right, and that if an increase of revenue was to be drawn from their districts, the precedent of former times would have been followed, and a Nuzzerana upon computation what their taluck could afford have been demanded instead of a close scrutiny or measurement of their lands. It must be allowed that such an argument would give just grounds to suspect that by compounding with the Government for a Nuzzerana, they hoped to reserve to themselves a larger proportion of the next revenue than would be continued to them if the full capacity of the lands were known.

Although from the grants of the Talucks it appears that the Government has not by any clause relinquished its original right to an exclusive possession of the Taluck lands, and that it can exert this right with the same justice towards the Taluckdars that it has done towards the Zemindars, by assuming the local management of the lands, and arbitrarily fixing the proportion of the revenue that shall be left to them; yet it seems to me that the Taluck being originally granted to gratify favourites, or to support fallen families, and that the circumstances under which the lands were given, continuing to operate to the advantage of the holders, by exempting them from local investigation or any extraordinary taxation by Government, except where the general defence of the country seemed particularly concerned (as in the article of chout levied for the protection of it against the Marathas).

NATIONAL BRAND OF INDIA

After a length of time an idea was entertained that the profits arising from the possession of Talucks was a species of property that people might confide in. Individuals therefore bought and sold Talucks. But to render the sale good, the sanction of Government was necessary, which being usually obtained without much difficulty, was no great impediment to such transactions. A despotic Government having power assumes a right to pursue its own interest, without regard to custom or privileges enjoyed under a former ruler. A just apprehension therefore that the Talucks would be resumed some time or other, or a tribute (or Nuzzarana) exacted for them, lessened the value of this species of property, which depended upon the pleasure of the present Administration, and every purchaser accordingly provided by the price he gave against such unfavourable events.

They observe further that though various articles of taxation have been imposed upon them and have considerably augmented their original payments to Government, yet no attempt was ever made to ascertain the full value of the Talucks either by scrutiny or measurement. As they have no positive right to urge, they can only apply themselves to your bounty for the continuance of an indulgence they have uninterruptedly enjoyed up to this time.

Farmers who have acquitted their engagements by a punctual discharge of their payments as they became due are entitled to a preference when their districts are to be farmed again, provided they are willing to pay as much as others offer. A dispossession of them would be productive of inconvenience and perhaps hardship to the ryot, to whom every change of authority is in a greater or less degree the source of expence and trouble. . . . I have permitted them to remain in charge of their lands, that in this critical season of the year they may take the necessary measures for preserving and extending the cultivation of them. And induced by the reasons before assigned, I have pledged assurances to them that if the final settlement of the lands lie with me, they shall be confirmed in their farms.

## No. 5. *Midnapore Settlement.*

*Calcutta Committee of Revenue Consultations*, 3.

October 30, 1772.

It is agreed to reject the proposals [for farming] and to give the preference to Zemindars and Taluckdars.

As Midnapore is one of the frontier provinces of Bengal it

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

becomes particularly necessary to endeavour by every indulgence to conciliate and preserve the goodwill of the inhabitants, who might otherwise be tempted to desert to their neighbours the Marattas in time of peace, or join them in case of disturbance. Were the lands to be let to strangers and the numerous body of Zemindars and Taluckdars left idle and without an interest in the province, it is natural to suppose that the neighbouring powers would not omit so favourable an opportunity of sowing among them the seeds of discontent, and weakening their attachment to the Company, whereas by maintaining them in their present possessions we shall conciliate and secure their affections and engage them, from motives of gratitude and interest, to unite in opposing any attempts upon their borders; besides the claim of hereditary right which the landholders of Midnapore have in common with those in the other parts of Bengal, the constant fidelity and obedience they have shown to the Company since the cession of that province forms a strong plea in their favour and sways the Board greatly on this occasion. They are happy therefore to observe that the advantage of the Company coincides with that of the hereditary proprietors.

. . . it is our general wish the hereditary possessors should be the farmers of the lands, if it can be effected with security to the revenue and safety to the Government.

[The two following documents deal with the Settlement of the Province of Bihar.]

### No. 6. *Duration of leases in Bihar.*

*Bengal Revenue Consultations*, 1, Range 49, vol. 38, p. 922. Extract from a Minute by G. Vansittart, Chief of Patna.

March 12, 1773.

. . . The longer the period of the lease, the more effectual measures it is in the power of the farmer to take for the encouragement of the new ryotts, and the more will a man of property be disposed to submit to a present expence for the sake of future improvements. The advantages of this plan are indeed allowed, if it could take place throughout the Province. The chief apprehension is that in case of a partial establishment it would be a means of depopulating the neighbouring pergunnas. It might be made a clause of the farmer's agreement that he should not offer any particular indulgences to inveigle the ryotts from other pergunnas of the Province, but in case of any coming to him, allow them only the same terms as the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

former ryotts of his lands. I scarcely however look upon such a precaution to be necessary. Ryots are seldom disposed to desert their antient habitations unless they are actually oppressed, and in this case if they do not find protection with other farmers they will seek it with the Jaghiredars &c. or in the districts of the Nabob Suja ul Dowla and Rajah Chyte Sing. All therefore who might be kept from the Jaghiredars or foreign districts would be a profit to the Government, all who might be brought from the Jaghiredars or foreign districts would be a further profit. And it is moreover to be considered that the farmer's advantages would not arise solely from the acquisition of the new inhabitants but by the employment of those who are already on the spot in the cultivation of more valuable articles. I have here argued on a supposition of the plan taking place in a particular district only, but I believe if it meets with your approbation it will soon be established in almost every part of the Bahar Province. . . .

[The following advertisement was resolved upon, p. 924.]

'That the lease is to continue during the life of the farmer, who will enjoy quiet possession of the lands with every improvement he may make on them, on his paying the full amount of his engagements to Government.

## No. 7. *Report of Revenue plans in Bihar.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xii.

November 10, 1773.

The Chief and Council of Patna in their letters of December 17, 1772, and February 22, 1773, strongly recommend that where responsible people can be found the leases in that Province should be extended for the life of the farmer, proposing that a moderate annual increase should be taken till the Revenue arose to the highest rate which the farm had yielded in any year since the Company's acquisition of the Dewanni, and then remain fixed. We approved of the plan and in consequence gave public notice that we would receive proposals either from the present farmers for a continuation of their leases or from new ones to receive possession at the expiration of the engagements already subsisting. The principal advantages to be expected from this plan in Bahar Province are, that the farmers being obliged by their own interest to treat their ryots with lenity might procure a supply of inhabitants from the neighbouring districts of the Nabob Shuja ul Dowla and Rajah Cheit Sing, and that they might be induced to employ their own money for the improvement of

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

the lands and the culture of the most valuable articles, which are at first attended with considerable expence, though they afterwards yield the greatest profit. A few of the old farmers (to the amount of about four lacks of rupees) have extended their leases on these terms, but they have not yet generally agreed to it nor have we received any new offers.

### No. 9. *Plan of a new Settlement*, 1775.

Original Minutes of the Governor-General and Council of Fort William on the Revenues of Bengal, by P. Francis, 1782. *India Office Library Catalogue*, p. 165.

April 22, 1775.

*Minute of Messrs. Hastings and Barwell.*

From the Company's acquisition of the Dewanni, it has been customary to make an annual settlement of the revenue of the several districts of Bengal. The principal Zemindars and all the chief people of the country assembled at the City at the holding of the Poonah, in the months of April and May.

A Settlement was then concluded, in some places with the Zemindars themselves, in others with persons who were appointed to the charge of the Collections, under the name of Aumils. The Aumils having each executed an agreement to pay a certain sum of money into the Treasury of Moorshedabad according to the stated periods specified in the Kistbundee, were sent into the country to form the Mofussil settlement and carry on the collections as they judged most expedient for realizing the revenue for which they had engaged.

[Amils discontinued in 1770. Collectors settle the revenue in 1770 and 1771, aided by Murshidabad.]

When the management of the revenues was the subject of deliberation of the Board, in 1772, it was unanimously agreed that the system of an annual settlement was not calculated for the prosperity of the country and the yearly attendance of the Zemindars at the city was deemed an unnecessary expense, which ultimately fell on the Company. A man of little or no property being appointed an Aumil executed an engagement to pay 15 or 20 lacks of rupees, was invested with full authority for collecting, and had no interest in the welfare of the district any longer than for the single year of his appointment. The settlements which were made with the Zemindars themselves were in like manner for one year only. If the lands went to decay, the next year's revenue was lessened, and if they were improved it was proportionately augmented. Arguments are not necessary to prove that such a system would naturally

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

produce oppression, and be a check to the most valuable articles of husbandry; it was resolved to let out the country on leases of 5 years, that the farmers might be induced by motives of self-interest to attend to its improvement. . . . The ascertaining of the value of the several districts has been sufficiently accomplished, but we will not say the desired improvement has in general taken place; it has been obstructed by a circumstance which could not be foreseen, we mean the farmers having engaged for higher revenues than the districts could afford.

The following is the plan which we have recommended to be adopted at the expiration of the present leases:

1. That all new taxes, which have been imposed upon the ryots in any part of the country since the commencement of the Bengal year 1172 [1764–5], being the year in which the Company obtained the Dewanny, be entirely abolished.

N.B.—Whenever any occasion has arisen or any pretence been found to lay a new tax upon the ryots, it has been the custom of the Zemindar and Aumil to continue to collect it whether the occasion has remained or not. By this means their rents have been constantly increasing. . . . The amount of the taxes imposed since the imposition of the Dewanny will hardly be less than 15 lack of rupees. . . .

This accumulation of taxes was practised to a still greater degree in the 10th or 15th years preceding the Company's acquiring the Dewanny than it has since. . . .

2. That the 24 Perganas be sold as Zemindaris by public auction, in lots not exceeding a jumma or rent roll of 20,000 or 30,000 r. p. a.

N.B.—The sale would raise a large sum of money, and there is no doubt that the lands would be greatly improved in the hands of Zemindars on the permanent footing which we have recommended. . . . We would recommend too that Europeans be allowed to be purchasers, provided they can be made amenable to the Revenue Courts and subject to the same regulations as the natives . . . being of a more enterprising spirit. . . . They would in time become an addition of strength to the British Empire in India. [1772. The English were then only amenable to the Mayor's Court and Courts of Sessions: 'this defect in the authority of Government has been effectually removed by the institution of the Supreme Court.']

3. That the revenue to be paid by the purchasers be settled at the medium of what was actually collected in the 3 preceding years, with an allowance of 15% deducted for the charges of Collection and their profits.

N.B.—i. e. 5% charges, 10% Zemindars' profits.

Aumeens sent into the perganas immediately on the expiration

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

of the present leases, would probably ascertain the collection without difficulty, as there would be no one interested to prevent it.

4. That the revenue do remain fixed at this rate during the life of the purchaser. That the Government be at liberty to sell the Zemindari if a Zemindar be deficient in his payment.

N.B.—The annual increase would put the Zemindar to difficulties, which would eventually produce oppression and prevent improvement, and deductions would become necessary, as at present in unfavourable seasons. If the revenue be fixed the profits of one year will compensate the losses of another; and should the Zemindar, through his own misconduct, be at any time deficient in his payment, a purchaser would never be wanting to take the Zemindari on terms which would secure the Government its just revenue.

5. That, on the death of any purchaser, the Zemindari shall devolve to his heirs. That it shall then be at the option of the Government to continue it fixed to him at the same rate as was paid by the purchaser, or to make a new Hustabood of it, and settle the rent on the medium of the actual collection of the 3 preceding years, in the manner proposed in the third article, with this proviso, however, that whatever may be the Hustabood no greater increase shall be levied than 10 % on the preceding lease. That the expense of the Hustabood be defrayed half by the Government and half by the Zemindar. If the new Zemindar agrees to an increase of 10 % a Hustabood will be unnecessary: this however should not be demanded unless the preceding Zemindar had possessed the estate at least 10 years. The increase proposed is very moderate, but we do not think it could be rendered greater consistently with the value which we wish to be set upon landed property: for upon this we deem the whole success of our plans to depend.

It cannot we think be reckoned an injustice that the successor should at any rate pay the same revenues as his predecessor. If the Zemindari is not worth holding on these terms, he will be at liberty to sell or relinquish it. It is a necessary regulation lest the successor should insist upon a Hustabood and, by influence and bribery, get the value of it reported much lower than the truth, and so defraud the Government.... This increase of 10 % should be demanded in each succession if the state of improvement will admit of it.

6. That should the new Zemindar refuse to hold the Zemindari at the same rate as was paid by his predecessor, he shall either sell it to some other persons, who will be answerable for the revenue, or else it shall be forfeited as an escheat to the Government.

7. That should the new Zemindar refuse to hold it on the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

terms of a Hustabood as proposed in the 5th article, he shall receive an allowance of 10 % on the preceding settlement and the Government shall be at liberty to farm it out on the best terms procurable.

N.B.—The Aumeen may have overvalued the Zemindari. This provision is to secure the Zemindar from the consequent loss, but is not good policy for the Government.

8. That should the new Zemindar be a minor and guardians have not been appointed by the father, the Government should take the Zemindari under its own charge, till he attains the age of 18 years, and be at liberty to farm it out on the best terms procurable, setting apart for him an allowance of 10 %.

N.B.—This is to secure the Zemindar against misconduct of his servants.

9. That as soon as he attains the age of 18 years, the farm should be offered to him on the terms proposed in the 5th article; and if he refuse to hold it on any of those terms, the Government shall be at liberty to farm it out as in the 7th article.

N.B.—The reason is that it may have deteriorated during the minority.

10. That all the other districts of Bengal be farmed out on leases for life, or for two joint lives, to such responsible people as shall offer the most advantageous terms, allowing a preference to the Zemindars provided they have attained the age of 18 years, if their offers are equal or nearly equal to those of others, or if they are equal to what the Council shall judge to be the real value of the lands.

N.B.—This is liable to misrepresentation as permitting favouritism on the part of the Council, but is necessary to prevent overrating as in 1772.

11. That it be expressly stipulated that no attention shall be paid to any proposals for an annual increase; it being meant that the same revenue shall be paid for the first year as for the subsequent years; that no increase be levied or deduction allowed on any account or pretence whatever.

N.B.—If the attention of Government be drawn aside by allurements held out of future increases, the revenue will be overrated. Many persons may be found who will not scruple to promise more than they are able to perform if by that means they can obtain their present view.

12. That it be observed as an invariable rule that if any Zemindar fails in his engagements his Zemindari or such part of it as may be necessary to pay the deficiency shall be publicly sold. The purchaser to hold it either on the terms of a

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Hustabood, as proposed in the 3rd article; or according to the preceding settlement, as may be specified in the advertisement.

N.B.—Without this article we should not think a settlement with the Zemindars advisable, especially with the great Zemindars. They are for the most part ignorant of or inattentive to business, and trust to their servants, who defraud or impose upon them. Besides it has been so long the custom of Bengal *to raise the rents to the full value of the lands*, that very few of them have any desire for their improvement. . . .

The fear of the sale of their lands is the only probable instrument of keeping them to their engagements [or of reimbursing Government].

13. That the several regulations proposed in the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th articles relative to the purchasers in the Calcutta Perganas shall equally extend to the purchasers in the other districts and to the present Zemindars.

14. That wherever the Zemindar does not farm his own Zemindari his allowance be fixed at 10% on the amount of the revenue settled by the Government.

N.B.—This is in accordance with the ancient custom called Malekana or the Proprietor's right.

15. That each Zemindar or Farmer, where the Farmer has possession, be authorized to exercise a Fouzdary Jurisdiction, and be made answerable for murders and robberies committed in his district, agreeable to the old constitution of the Empire.

N.B.—The Fouzdary Jurisdiction, according to the constitution of the Empire, is inherent in the Zemindar, but it will be dangerous to entrust the exercise of it to any other than the person who has the charge of the Collections, nor would it prove effectual in any other hands. Continual jealousies and contentions would be excited between the Farmer and the Fouzdar. The Farmer would suffer by the oppression of his ryots, if the latter has a superior influence, or he would make use of such a plea to obtain remission of his rents and the Fouzdar would be unable to act if the Farmer's influence prevailed, as the ryots would always fly to him for protection. Some regulation of this kind is necessary for the peace of the country. . . .

16. That for the Salt Contracts, a preference be allowed to the Farmer, and that in future it may be regulated that the Molungis or Salt-boilers shall not be obliged to work whether they choose it or not, but only that if they do work, it shall be for the Contractor, and that their salt shall be delivered to him; the prices to be settled by mutual agreement.

N.B.—We propose that the Zemindar or Land-Farmer should also be the contractor, because he would be able to execute that business with greater advantage than another. An order restricting the Molungis to the service of the contractor cannot be oppressive, if they are at the same time allowed to quit that business altogether, in case they cannot settle with the contractor to their

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

own satisfaction for the price and condition of their labour. Such a permission would put them on a happier footing than they have ever yet enjoyed.

That the Government should continue to draw a revenue from the article of salt appears highly proper and equitable; we know not any more equal or equitable mode of taxation. Suppose the inhabitants are one with another to expend a seer of salt per month (which is a large allowance), and suppose the Government to draw from it a rev. of one rupee p. maund, which would amount to 20 lacs; the charge to each person would be little more than a fourth part of a rupee in a year, so mere a trifle that it could scarcely be felt: we suppose the utmost. The real increase of price since the year 1772, when the Government took the salt manufacture into their own hands, has not been a ½ r. p. maund.

17. That these regulations or such part of them as shall be approved, and any others which the Hon. Court of Directors shall think fit to add to them, be passed into fixed law by their express command. That it shall not be in the power of the Government and Council to change or deviate from them on any occasion or for any pretence whatever; and that copies thereof in the English, the Persian, and the Bengali languages, be affixed to all the Cucherries of the provinces, with the same authority declared for their establishment and duration.

N.B.—The *continual variations* on the mode of collecting the revenue and the *continual usurpations* on the right of the people, which have been produced by the remissness or the rapacity of the Mogul Government, and in the English by the desire of acquiring *a reputation* from a sudden increase of the collections without a sufficient attention to the remote consequences, have fixed in the ryots so rooted a distrust of the ordinances of Government that no assurances however strong will persuade them that laws, which have no apparent object but the ease of the people and the security of property, can be of long duration, unless confirmed by a stronger pledge than the resolution of a fluctuating administration. Even with the Hon. Court of Directors time will be required to reconcile their belief to so extraordinary a revolution in the principles of this Government. . . .

Both by the Mahomedan and Gentoo laws inheritance should be divided amongst the sons in equal proportions; yet it has been established by custom that the large Zemindaris shall not be divided, but be possessed entire by the eldest son, who is to support his younger brothers: on the contrary it is usual for the small Zemindaris to be divided amongst all the sons, but in many parts of the country the custom prevails that the eldest should have something more than the others.

The reverse of these customs we think would be for the interest of the Government: we mean that a large Zemindari should be divided, and the small ones should be preserved entire.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

... With respect to the mode of managing the collection of the revenue and the administration of justice none occur to us so good as the system which is already established of the Provincial Councils. We are under some apprehensions, however, lest the members of these should divide into parties.... It is the natural consequence of the dissensions in the superior Council: and our constant care will be required to prevent it.

WARREN HASTINGS.
RICHARD BARWELL.

[A minute of January 22, 1776, gives Philip Francis's alternative plan, which aims at the welfare of the native and a permanent Settlement making the land over to the Zemindars, &c., for good with full right of ownership.]

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

# CHAPTER IX

## REVENUE

Discredited experiments—Supreme Board created, 1772—Khalsa brought to Calcutta—Collectors checked by Diwans—Temporary Provincial Councils, 1774—Permanent arrangement, 1781.

THE Settlement of the Lands was made primarily for purposes of revenue and as an essential preliminary to the Collections, but its prime interest for the historian is rather social than fiscal. The measures by which the Revenue executive was revised had on the other hand the financial welfare of the Company as their first object and may be examined apart for the sake of greater clearness.

The transitional character of the period 1765 to 1772 is perhaps more marked in the sphere of Finance than in any other. Under the Mogul Government it was the main function of the Diwan to collect the revenues, and his chief agent was the Royroyan, or head of the Khalsa, i.e. the Treasury at Murshidabad. To this office belonged the recording of the engagements entered into by the Zemindars, Talukdars, &c., at the Pooniah or annual Settlement, and to it all subordinate officials, Diwans, Amils, Shicdars, &c. sent in their accounts. In 1765 English supervision first began to be exercised over the operations of the Khalsa by Francis Sykes, the Resident at the Durbar, but only indirectly and through the medium of Mohamed Reza Khan, who united in his person the offices of Deputy Nizam and Diwan, formerly distinct. In 1769 the appointment of supervisors extended an authority similar to the Resident's into all the districts, and in June 1770 the Court of Directors' orders of June 30, 1769, were executed, which created Boards of Control of the Revenue at Murshidabad and Patna.[1] These Boards, like the individuals who

[1] *Home Miscellaneous*, 205, Summary of Proceedings of Bengal Government.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

preceded them, had cognizance of judicial as well as revenue causes, inasmuch as they replaced the original Diwani authority at those stations. In the districts the supervisors continued to act, and both they and the two Boards of Control developed a dangerous independence of the Calcutta Government. To obviate this evil the Council at Calcutta on April 1, 1771, formed itself into a Committee of Revenue [1] and ordered the provincial bodies to submit their correspondence and accounts to it. These revealed grave need for reform. Great arrears of revenue were shown to be due from most of the districts and complaints of extortion and injustice on the part of native officials or supervisors' servants abounded. In Burdwan, Midnapore, and Chittagong alone the proper amount of the taxes was forthcoming, and no grievances appeared which were not due to natural causes. There the lands had been rented for periods of three years, and the comparative security of tenure proved such an encouragement to the farmers that it was extended to five years.[2]

When in the spring of 1772 Hastings took up the work of the Diwani, he determined to adopt this system of five-year leases. A supreme Revenue authority was created at Calcutta, to consist of the whole Council sitting as a Board of Revenue.[3] The Boards of Control at Murshidabad and Patna came to an end,[4] and the new Settlement Regulations were issued to reorganize the Revenue system throughout the country.[5]

Hitherto, of the two alternative methods of collection, native and English, neither had proved satisfactory; it remained for Hastings to find the just mean between a purely native and an English executive. Obviously Englishmen could not do the actual gathering in of taxes from the renters, a force of native subordinates must be maintained; but it

[1] *Calcutta Committee of Revenue Proceedings*, 1, Range 67, vol. 53.
[2] *Bengal Letters*, vol. ix, November 15, 1771.
[3] Ibid., vol. xi, p. 80.
NOTE.—This supreme Board of Revenue must be carefully distinguished from its predecessor, the Calcutta Committee of Revenue, now dissolved.
[4] *Calcutta Committee of Revenue Consultations*, 1, Range 67, vol. 53, p. 154.
[5] *Committee of Circuit*, p. 277.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

was equally clear that the management in each District must be in English hands, if the Diwani was to be a reality; the vexed question was how to keep a check on these isolated English overseers. Hastings had no reform more at heart than their entire removal and the concentration of all authority at the new capital, but that could only be done when the condition of the lands should have been accurately ascertained and the English management in the realm of finance established on fixed lines; meanwhile the collectors must remain in the Districts. He devised a means of checking them by coupling with each Englishman a native Naib Diwan, to act under him as head of the native revenue executive. All orders would issue from the collector, signed with the Company's seal, and all funds pass through his hands to the Treasury, but the Diwan would record each measure and register all accounts, sending in an independent report to the Khalsa now seated at Calcutta. Thus as before 1772, in each District a pair of revenue chiefs was set up, one native and one English, to carry on the local work of the collections, but the new system differed essentially from that of the supervisorships, for the two sets of officials were now independent of one another and both under the control of the Calcutta Supreme Board of Revenue, and very definite rules for their mutual conduct and procedure were issued. While there could be no clash of authority between the two, each would serve as a check upon the other.[1] As a further safeguard no collector was allowed to hold office longer than two successive years.[2]

At Calcutta the Council sat in its new capacity as a Board of Revenue twice a week, 'for issuing the necessary orders to the collectors, inspecting, auditing and passing their accounts', &c. Every week a fresh member of the Council took his turn as auditor of the revenue and reported on the collectors' accounts; present with him before the Board was the Royroyan, so that any discrepancy between the native and English reports was speedily apparent.

In January 1773 Hastings speaks with satisfaction of this

[1] Cf. pp. 268, 274.
[2] *Bengal Letters*, vol. xi, March 25, 1773.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

first stage of revenue reform: 'I have hitherto every reason to be pleased with the change. Calcutta is now the capital of Bengal and every office and trust of the Province issues from it. The business [is] in as good a train as could possibly be expected so soon after so great a revolution, this department [revenue] as regular and as much on train as if it had existed since the days of Job Charnock.' But by the end of the year he found the revenue returns were disappointing, and while defending the reforms admitted 'it will require a long and intricate train of reasoning to prove that the future increase of national wealth, of Revenue and Trade, were really produced by them'.

Before receiving Hastings's report, however, the Court of Directors had dispatched new orders on April 7, 1773, by the *Harcourt*. They were disappointed with the low revenues of 1770 and 1771, and attributed the blame to the supervisors, proposing that they should be withdrawn and local Revenue Councils created. It was indeed Hastings's ultimate aim to have the whole business conducted by a central authority in Calcutta, dealing directly with the landholders and without any such intermediaries as the collectors, but the experience of 1771 had proved that local councils were also apt to grow insubordinate. It was necessary to concert measures which should avoid both evils, and many consultations were held before the members of the Council reached an agreement. Hastings felt that, much as he desired it, the immediate removal of the collectors would endanger the revenue and also lay too great a strain of additional business on the members of the Council. Some local body must, it seemed, be retained in the Districts, for 'those who have ever shown themselves most diligent and knowing in the business of the Revenue were unwilling and fearful to undertake the management of it (at Calcutta) at such a distance from the Cucherries, until the Country was brought into better order'.

The measures finally adopted were a compromise and an admission of the experimental nature of the work. They comprised two distinct Plans, one for immediate operation, but confessedly a temporary half-measure; the other a final and

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

permanent system, drawn up in detail but not to be promulgated until the country should be ripe for it; it was in fact published in 1781.

In January 1774 the Temporary Plan, better known as the system of the Provincial Councils, took effect. The collectors remained in their Districts, but these were 'formed into Six Divisions, each comprehending several inferior Districts under the directions of a Chief and Council'.[1] A Diwan was appointed to each Division to keep accounts and records in the native tongue and under him a Naib Diwan to each District as before. This differed from the system of 1772 only in setting up a Chief and Council to control a group of collectors, who were now empowered to appoint their own Naib Diwans. There were grave risks of tyranny in this retention of part of the old order; it was on this account plainly declared to be only temporary and provisional and introductory to the final one, into which it was to merge by degrees: 'Whenever the accounts and arrangements of any one Division shall be so regulated and completed as to enable them to bring the control down to the Presidency, the Provincial Council shall be accordingly withdrawn and either continue to conduct the business of the Division at the Presidency or transfer it at once to the Committee.' The Committee here spoken of was the 'Provincial' Council of the Calcutta District, which was from the beginning given a different title and status from the rest with this view that all might be gradually absorbed into it. The effect of the final change would be to leave the revenue work in the Districts entirely to the native subordinate executive, answerable to the Calcutta Committee through the channel of the Khalsa, as is stated in the original scheme of March 10, 1774: 'to collect the Revenues in the Districts by the agency of dewans, who shall be subject to the orders of a Committee or inferior Council of Revenue; to consist of two members of the Board and three Company's servants, to meet daily and correspond with the dewans, register their accounts in the Khalsa, and hear complaints.' The safeguard was added of sending inspectors from time to time to make

[1] *Bengal Revenue Consultations*, 1, Range 49, vol. 45, p. 3655.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

a tour of the Districts. The object of this entire series of reforms was one and the same: to remove the abuses inevitable when the English revenue official resided in his District. Throughout Hastings's anxiety to remove the collections to the capital arises from the determination to root out these 'heavy rulers of the people', and even at the cost of a temporary deficit in his employers' receipts to give the ryot and the weaver a chance to thrive.

The course of these reforms was not smooth; owing to the troubled state of the Council in 1775 the Provincial Councils were not properly controlled, and the worst features of what was known to be a dubious system got the upper hand. But in 1776, when the Aumenee Courts were established, Hastings remodelled the Provincial Councils lest the objects of that inquiry should be frustrated, saying: 'I will not leave such wretches as Goring, Rosewell, and James Grant in power to render my designs abortive. . . . God be praised! There are few such in the Service.'

In 1781 Hastings did at last achieve his revenue work and make the final, long-sought correction. The Provincial Councils and collectors were withdrawn and the administration of the revenue put into the hands of a Committee of four, Messrs. Anderson, Shore, Chartres, and Crofts. He writes: 'They have no fixed salaries and are sworn to receive no perquisites. In lieu of both they are to draw a commission of 1% on the monthly amount of the net collections and double on the sums paid immediately in Calcutta. By this plan we hope to bring the whole administration of the revenue to Calcutta without any intermediate charge or agency.' He hoped thus to make great savings to the Company: 'the increase this year will be about 27 lacks and the saving of expenses 12: in all 39 lacks.'

Thus through nine years of hard and patient application Hastings secured the working out of his solution to the problem of waste and oppression in the revenue. The essentially corrupt office of collector vanished and an orderly system was set working, with the supreme power at its centre and natives, conversant with local needs and customs, at the extremities.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER IX

### No. 1. *Creation of Calcutta Committee of Revenue.*

*Letter from the Secretary to the members of the new Committee of Revenue.*

*Calcutta Committee of Revenue Consultations*, 1, Range 67, vol. 53, p. 154.

April 1, 1771.

The Hon. Pres. and Council have given me orders to inform you that in pursuance of the Hon. Court of Directors' commands in their letter to the Commissioners they have been pleased to establish a Committee of Revenue. . . .

The Court of Directors have sent orders to the Councils of Revenue at Moorshedabad and Patna, to the Residents at Burdwan and Midnapore, to the Collector of the Revenues of the Chittagong districts and to the Collector of the 24 Pergunnahs to correspond with you in future on every matter relative to the Revenue and to obey your directions. . . .

The Custom House Master has also received directions to obey all your Commands on whatever relates to his department.

The Hon. Pres. and Council have taken a resolution that for the present your Committee shall be composed of all the Members of their Board, that no time may be lost . . . by referring matters to their consideration.

[The Committee consequently consists of :]

Messrs. Cartier.
,, Kelsall.
,, Floyer.
,, Reed.
,, Hare.

### No. 2. *Bengal Revenue Returns, 1770 and 1771.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. x, p. 85, Secret Department.

November 15, 1771.

Para. 3. The Collections made on the last year's Settlement at the City [i. e. Moorshedabad] amounted to S. R. 119,29,506, 13, 9, 2, and the Balance incurred to about 37 lacks. . . . We are apprehensive much the largest part must be remitted. A failure in the Collections of so large a Settlement was naturally to be expected from the ruinous and depopulated State of the Country when made, and the Variety

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

of Local Accidents it is subject to either from a want of rain in some Parts or an excess in others, with the Probability of several Districts being inundated, must always occasion some Deficiency on the Annual Settlement. . . .

Para. 4. Having received since closing the Revenue Proceedings, the Settlement for the present year, amounting to Nett Revenue S. R. 166,37,147, 12, 4, We beg leave to forward the same as a Paper of the Packet, as likewise a Letter from the Muxadavad Council containing their Remarks on the Settlement of each particular District under the different Supervisors. From this Settlement we find an Increase of Nine Lack on the preceding one, which we hope will appear to you to be a very considerable addition to your Annual Revenue, so immediately after a Year which produced such Variety of Distress and Calamity to the Inhabitants of these Provinces; and as the Supervisors have by this Time established their Authority in their different Departments, and the season is favourable to the Crops, we entertain no doubt but the Collections will be made without incurring any material Balances. [Burdwan, Midnapore and Chittagong Revenue, 1771, p. 90.]

Para. 7. The Collections in the Province of Burdwan have been made without any balances outstanding. . . . The three years lease entered into with the farmers by Mr. Becher . . . being expired, we thought proper to give directions to our Resident there to put the lands up to sale in a lease of five years, being of opinion that when the true value of the lands is nearly ascertained the most probable means of their further improvement must depend on long leases and such as make it the Interest of the Farmer to encourage the Industry of his Ryots and extend and improve the Cultivation of the lands. This measure from your repeated letters we have the pleasure to find to be entirely conformable to your Sentiments. But from the decayed condition of many of the Pergunnas of this Province by the Loss of the Inhabitants and the Neglect of Cultivation their Value was so considerably reduced that no Farmers would take them on the Terms they were before held on. And a deduction therefore in the Rents of these Pergunnas the Resident has been obliged to allow in the lease of those lands, though an increase has been added on the more flourishing Pergunnas to the Southwards.

With equal Success have the Collections of Midnapore Province been made as those of Burdwan without any Balances remaining. . . .

A Balance of S. R. 10,233 arises on the Bundabust or Settlement of Chittagong Province, part of which will be recovered.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

## No. 3. *Regulations for the Khalsa.*

*Committee of Circuit*, p. 277.

August 20, 1772.

The Committee proceed to lay down such Regulations as they judge will be requisite for conducting the General Superintendence of the Revenue System at the Presidency and the Business of the Khalsa in its detail.

The Dewanni may in the first place be considered as composed of two Branches :

1. The Collection of the Revenue.
2. The Administration of Justice in Civil Cases.

For regulating the Latter a separate Plan has been already framed. The Farming having been entirely subdivided into Collectorships, under the Agency of the Company's servants, the Control and Superintendence, to be exercised by the President and Council, will consist chiefly in issuing the necessary Orders to those Collectors, in inspecting, auditing and passing their Accounts and in occasionally visiting their Districts for the purpose of making Local Investigations and Enquiries into the State of them and into the Collectors' Discharge of their Duty to the Public and to their Employers. The Committee are of opinion that this weighty and important Trust can be nowhere so properly lodged as in the body of the Council at large. The Hon. Court of Directors have indeed recommended the Mode of Committees, but nothing being so essential to the Success of the Revenue System as Expedition in deciding upon all Points of Reference and in issuing the consequent Orders, and as a Committee being only authorized to prepare Matter for the Sanction and Approbation of the Council at large must necessarily occasion Delay in this particular, This Committee think it will always be for the Interest of the Company to profit by the Counsel and Service of every Member of their Administration in so capital an Object of their Affairs.

For Conducting the General Control therefore of the Dewanni and for Managing the detail of the Business of the Khalsa the following Regulations are proposed :

[Summary only; the full text may be found in the *House of Commons Reports*, vol. iv, p. 312.]

The whole Council to form a Board of Revenue and meet twice a week.

One Member to act each week as Auditor of the Duannee.

Accounts to be made up weekly and passed by the whole Board monthly.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

A principal Muttaseddie to be appointed to superintend the conduct and receive the accounts of the provincial Duans; to be stiled Roy royan and attend at the B. of Revenue. Rajabullub to be appointed.

The Khalsa to examine and compare all accounts of the Duans with the invoices, directing payments to be made into the Treasury, receive such rents as may be paid at Calcutta, prepare grants, sunnuds and perwannahs : to be conducted by the members of the Council in rotation and the Roy royan.

The Roy royan to report daily to the President and to attend daily on the member of Council superintending the Khalsa. To have a translator.

A Company's servant with assistants to be Accountant-General of the Dewanni. C. Croftes recommended.

List of Officers &c.

## No. 4. *Revenues of Bengal*, 1765 *to* 1771.

*House of Commons Reports*, vol. iv, App. 65, p. 535.

EAST INDIA HOUSE.

February 26, 1773.

| | | *Gross Colls.* | *Chrges.* | *King.* | *Nabob.* | *Minrs.* | *J'ghir.* | *Comn.* | *Net Revenue.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| May 1765 | | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| to April | 1766 | 2,258,227 | 174,442 | 26,897 | 330,125 | 4,930 | 40,406 | | 1,681,427 |
| ,, | 1767 | 3,805,817 | 417,014 | 205,766 | 534,353 | 72,745 | 29,912 | 18,433 | 2,527,594 |
| ,, | 1768 | 3,608,009 | 348,965 | 300,030 | 371,824 | 175,696 | 29,096 | 23,393 | 2,359,005 |
| ,, | 1769 | 3,787,207 | 335,966 | 356,610 | 413,330 | 148,394 | 29,096 | 101,620 | 2,402,191 |
| ,, | 1770 | 3,341,976 | 349,849 | 282,005 | 402,928 | 153,540 | 29,096 | 35,190 | 2,089,368 |
| ,, | 1771 | 3,332,343 | 358,091 | 382,473 | 371,249 | 136,054 | 29,096 | 48,204 | 2,007,176 |

King and Ministers.

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | |
| ,, | 1772 | 319,845 | 709,054 | 29,096 | 66,311 | 2,380,165 | [p. 316] |

JOHN HOOLE, Auditor of Accounts.

## No. 5. *Account of Revenues*, 1771.

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xi, p. 79.

November 3, 1772.

Para. 1. . . . We have closed the Account of the neat Settlement and Collections for the last Bengal Year [i. e. May 1770 to April 1771], a copy of which we now transmit . . . the total Receipts . . . amounted for the last year to S.R. 157,26,576, 10, 2, 1 . . . We flatter ourselves that the comparative View we hope you will take of the Bengal Collections

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

for these several Years past with those of last Year will satisfy you as to the favorable Success we have met with in the Collections of the Revenues.

Para. 6, p. 83. [Effects of Famine.] The effects of the dreadful Famine which visited these Provinces in the Year 1770, and raged during the whole course of that Year, have been regularly made known to you by our former advices and to the Public by laboured Descriptions, in which every Circumstance of Fact, and every Art of Language, have been accumulated to raise Compassion, and to excite Indignation against your Servants whose unhappy Lot it was to be the Witnesses and Spectators of the Sufferings of their Fellow Creatures, But its influence on the Revenue has been yet unnoticed and even unfelt by those from whom it is collected: for notwithstanding the Loss of at least one-third of the Inhabitants of the Province, and the consequent Decrease of the Cultivation, the nett Collections of the Year 1771 exceeded even those of 1761, as will appear from the following abstract of Accounts of the Board of Revenue at Moorshedabad, for the four last Years.

| Bengal Year. A. D. | | Net Collections. Sicca Rupees. | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1175 or 1768 | . . . . . | 152,54,856 | 9 | 4 | 3 |
| 1176 or 1769. | The year of dearth which was productive of the Famine in the following year . . | 131,49,148 | 6 | 3 | 2 |
| 1177 or 1770. | The year of Famine and Mortality . . . . | 140,06,030 | 7 | 3 | 2 |
| 1178 or 1771 | . . . . . | 157,26,576 | 10 | 2 | 1 |
| | Deduct amount of Deficiencies occasioned in the Revenue by unavoidable Losses to Government . . . | 3,92,915 | 11 | 12 | 3 |
| | | S.R. 153,33,660 | 14 | 9 | 2 |

Para. 7. [The Revenue did not show a loss correspondent to the Famine because it was 'violently kept up' by means of the Najay Cess, &c.]

## No. 6. *Kanungoes.*

### *Account of Mr. Baber, Resident at Midnapore, and consequent reduction of their powers.*

*Calcutta Committee of Revenue Consultations*, 3.

December 15, 1772.

The real office is only that of a public register, but there are some circumstances attending it that have contributed to give the possessors an authority in the Province superior to any

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

other, even that of the Phouzdar himself. The appointment is hereditary and therefore not being subject to those Charges to which that of the Phouzdar was liable, it became from this permanancy very respectable; besides which the Canongoes have always been the agents of Government set up as spies on the conduct of the Phouzdar; consequently they have been justly considered as favorites of the Court, and respected as such. From the nature of their office they have a Dufter in each pergunnah. Thus they have Carcoons and Mohurris in all parts of the Provinces, by whose means and from their own perpetual residence they are so intimately acquainted with the circumstances of the Zemindars, that they keep them in the most abject subjection. The Revenues of Midnapore have been always settled upon a Tushkees or conjectural valuation and no Hustabood ever taken: as long as the terms of the Tushkees were complied with no scrutiny was made into the Zemindar's estate, and therefore the knowledge of a Phouzdar relative to the value of it must be extremely inaccurate. This the Zemindars well knew, and they also know as well that it was in the power of the Canongoes to expose the value of their pergunnas to the Phouzdar. This power the Canongoes availed themselves of, and it was the rod which they held over them, so that the apprehension of an increase of his rents kept the Zemindar in very effectual awe of the Canongoe and there were scarcely any terms which the one could impose to which the other would not submit. Hence it arose that the Zemindar was obliged to grant them many indulgences by way of Hush-money. He let them have farms at an undervalue, he granted them Charity lands under the denomination of Demutter Bumutter &c. and he suffered them to establish Hauts and Gunges with certain immunities. In a word the Canongoes have an absolute influence over them, which they exercise in every method that can promote their own interest: and how fruitful in expedient these people are I need not say—I shall only observe that in general these expedients operate to the prejudice of the Country.

It was well known that the Canongoes were better acquainted with the state of the Provinces than any other persons, but the Zemindars individually, could possibly be; it was therefore natural to apply to them on many points relative to the Collections, and in this manner they insinuated themselves into a branch of business foreign to their office; however they made themselves so useful in this department, that at length most of the business of the Provinces was transacted through them: and this intermediate agency between the Phouzdar

and Zemindar threw an additional weight of influence into their scale. From these sources flowed in a tide of ascendency to the Canongoes, which greatly sunk the power of the Phouzdar, and though it was nominally vested in the latter, it was exercised *really* by the former.

One innovation paved the way for another and in process of time it has so happened that now the Canongoes manage not only the Zemindars but the business of the Province. There is not a record but is in their possession, nor a paper given in by the Zemindar but through them. Their continual residence on the spot gave them opportunities which they never let slip of interfering in the Collections. They watched the different tempers of the Phouzdars and made encroachments on their authority according as they found them more or less active. From one step to another they have advanced so far as to get the chief management of the Collections in their own hands; and so much of the executive part have they at last obtained, that they are now virtually the Collector, whilst he is formally a mere passive representative of Government. They are the channel through which all his information comes, and through which all his orders are conveyed. In this double capacity they have a double advantage: they can dictate what information they choose should be given to the Collector, and they execute their own dictates. This usurped power is not more repugnant to every principle of good government than it is contrary to the original institution of the office, which was nothing more than that of simply keeping copies of the Collections, which were stipulated by the Government and made by the Phouzdars, and of witnessing and registering public deeds.

The intent and utility of this department in the Mogul Government were excellent. It was constituted to check and control the Phouzdars' and Zemindars' accounts, and that notwithstanding the many and frequent changes of Phouzdars there might be preserved regular Records uninterrupted by these events, and an office remain to which Government could always apply for materials regarding the Collections.

I have showed the reason why the Zemindar is afraid of offending the Canongoe, whence it is also very apparent why the Canongoe should keep on good terms with the Zemindar and it is the interest of both to keep the Collector as much in the dark as possible. This collusive connection between the Canongoe and the Zemindar is diametrically opposite to the intention of the Government and entirely counteracts the very purposes which the appointment was meant to promote. Instead of being the agents of the Government they are

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

become the associates of the Zemindars and conspire with them to conceal what it is their chief duty to divulge.

After so many years, nay almost centuries, ought not Government to have obtained from these people the most perfect and intimate knowledge of the nature and value of the rents? and will it be believed that at this day, it is still in the dark? however extraordinary it may appear I may venture to say that it is really the *case*, and as a proof (might I be permitted) I would appeal to the late Settlement of the Revenues of Midnapore on what information? on what materials was it made? was there a single instrument produced to guide the Board? It is true the Canongoes have a most perfect knowledge of the Provinces and a very great influence over the Zemindars and in both these respects might have been of the greatest use to the Council, but this influence and this knowledge they keep to themselves, employing both for their own purposes. Instead of assisting the Board in making the Settlement, what trouble did they not give, what opposition did they not make to it?

In regard to the utility of the office, as to its being a perpetual register, I humbly conceive that it is quite destroyed by the appointment of a perpetual dewan, who is established for the same purpose on an infinitely better footing. Where then is the use of the Company's paying wages to the Canongoe for the support of Carcoons and Mohurris, who can now be employed only in keeping up connections and an authority which it is evidently their interest to abolish? . . .

Resolved—

That the Resident be directed in conjunction with the Dewan to take upon him the office exercised by the Canongoes; and that he do receive from them all their papers and accounts and dismiss the Carcoons and Mohurris employed by them in the Mofussil, so that they may be wholly dispossessed from all the charge and management of the Collections; registering of all deeds, contracts, and grants of lands shall be continued to them as formerly, in consideration of which they shall still receive their allowance of Nancar.

## No. 7. *State of the Country*, 1773.

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xii, p. 137; Revenue Department.

November 10, 1773.

Para. 31. We cannot conclude without laying before you the present situation of the Country, as it impresses us with the most serious anxiety and calls for your impartial attention.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

In our last letter we advised you that the Periodical Rains had fallen very seasonably in most parts of Bengal and presented the prospect of an abundant harvest.

Para. 32. It is therefore with unfeigned concern we are now obliged to acquaint you that by the advices received from the province of Bahar and different parts of Bengal, we have reason to be under great apprehensions of a failure in the present crops and of course a deficiency in the Revenue which depends so entirely on the produce of the earth.

About the beginning of September there happened a very severe fall of rain which continued for two whole days, attended with a violent wind and rapid overflowing of waters. This storm, which extended itself over the greatest part of the country, not only destroyed considerable quantities of the old grain which were deposited in granaries and forced the Inhabitants of numerous villages to desert from their houses and seek their personal safety on the banks of Tanks and higher spots of country, but also inundated the cultivated lands, on which the harvest was in great forwardness. To the representations which reached us from many quarters, in consequence of this public misfortune, claiming our consideration and a scrutiny of the losses sustained, we hardly had had time to pay any attention, when a calamity succeeded still more alarming, for in places where the waters of inundation subsided in any short space of time, the paddy would again have recovered its vegetation and the harvest have been but immaterially affected. But whilst we were thus suspending our enquiries to preclude the effects of fraud and exaggeration, a drought ensued which has lasted ever since September 15, and by which the grain which had recovered the inundation being deprived of the moisture necessary to fill the ear and bring it to maturity is likely to be blasted and totally destroyed. It is impossible we can speak with precision on such a subject in regard to every district of the provinces. . . .

Para. 33. We will not anticipate a calculation of the losses to be expected . . . but we earnestly entreat you to bestow your attention on the above events and to allow them that weight in your judgement of our conduct, which may be justly claimed by a consideration of circumstances so delicate as the various casualties incident to your revenue. It is a fact universally known that your Collections suffered a considerable diminution last year from the abundance of the harvests and the cheapness of grain, particularly in the northern districts; and it is now not less notorious that the same consequence is to be seriously apprehended from the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

inundation and drought. These are circumstances as to which no circumspection or prudence can afford either a guard or a remedy; and where local knowledge withholds its aid they require to be judged of with most literal candour, in order to admit the conviction that the same effects proceed from most opposite causes. The measures we have taken, as advised from the General Department, to prevent the risk of a second scarcity we trust will answer the proposed end and be honoured with your approbation.

No. 8. *Revenues of Bihar and Kuch Behar.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xii, p. 219.

December 31, 1773.

Para. 6. You will observe that the Collections of Bahar Province for the last year have fallen short of those of the preceding year. The principal deficiency has arisen in the Collectorship of Tirhut, owing to the great part of the crop having been destroyed for want of rain in September and October.

The reductions on account of the abolition of the chokeys were also considerable, but the loss arising from this circumstance will we hope be compensated by the Collections of the Custom House established at Patna according to our new regulations.

Para. 7. You will perceive also that the settlement of Bahar for the present year has been considerably reduced by the deductions allowed on account of the inundations which in the month of September last proved uncommonly violent in many parts of that province. Representations were made by different renters to the Council at Patna and by them to us, and were confirmed by the accounts we have received from our President who was then on the spot. Where the revenue is rated agreably to the expected produce in a tolerably favorable season, we are obliged, however unwillingly, to admit of deductions on account of extraordinary accidents, lest an ill-timed severity should add to the desolation of the country and discourage all persons of credit from engaging in the farming business.

Para. 8. In the 3 years settlement which was made of Bahar Province concluding with the year 1181, the several renters having engaged that if the Government chose it they would continue to hold their farm for the year 1181, We have thought it for your interest that they should be continued accordingly. We have further given notice that on the expiration of these

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

leases, we purpose letting out for 5 years all such part of Bahar Province as cannot be settled on the Mocurrery Plan or leases for life, the particulars of which we explained to you in the 16th paragraph of our last address, and we have in consequence directed the Chief and Council at Patna to transmit to us proposals for the present renters, should any of them be desirous of extending their leases to that period on such terms as may be judged advantageous.

Para. 12. The Collector of Cooch Bahar has sent us a statement of the Revenue of that District amounting to 3½ lacks, of which one half belongs to the Company, the other to the Rajah, but part of the Rajah's share will be paid to the Company according to the Treaty for defraying the expenses of the expedition.

This country appears now to be tolerably free from the irruptions of the Boutanners, and we have ordered the Collector to be particularly attentive to conciliate the minds of the inhabitants. As the Rajah is not himself capable of conducting the executive part of the Collections we propose to farm out the country on his behalf in such divisions as may appear most eligible.

## No. 9. *New Plan of Revenue Department. Letter to Mr. Boulton, Chairman of the Court*, 1773–4.

British Museum Add. MS. 29127, p. 108.

Fort William. November 11, 1773.

Dear Sir, I beg leave to repeat my grateful thanks to you particularly for the great honor done me both in the public letters to the Board and in those which the Court of Directors were pleased to address to me singly.[1] So ample and honorable a testimony of their approbation exceeded even my wishes, although the consciousness of my own integrity and the conviction of the propriety of my conduct led me to hope for a general approbation. I hope the political measures I have lately engaged in will obtain the same sanction.

The receipt of your advices and commands by the *Harcourt* has opened to us a scene for great improvements, and it is our united wish to make them on a large and liberal plan, which shall include the interests of the Company for a length of years to come. The execution of it must also be the progressive work of years. In this business the members of the Board have not met officially, but separately contributed their ideas,

[1] *Vide* p. 145, No. 8.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

which have been compared and corrected in many private meetings till we have compiled them into a system correspondent to all our ideas. This we have nearly completed, but we have not yet *brought* it on our Records, nor reported it in our General Letter, because it still wants the last correction. These are the outlines of the Plan :

In addition to the present Chiefships to form three more with a Council to each which shall have charge of the Collections. This divided into the following grand divisions :

1. Calcutta.
2. Moorshedabad.
3. Patna or Bahar.
4. Dacca.
5. Dinagepore.
6. Burdwan.[1]

Each of these stations takes in the Districts round it. A Member of the superior Council with 4 others composes each Council. Two Members of the Board with 3 inferior Servants superintend the Division of Calcutta which is called a Committee. These departments are all to correspond with the Board of Revenue. They are designed only for a temporary expedient for the present purpose of directing the Collections and for the future purpose of introducing by degrees another system which it is hoped will be fixed for perpetuity and is as follows :

That the present Districts now managed by Collectors may be superintended by Dewans or principal Farmers and be controuled by a Committee of Revenue in Calcutta formed as that proposed on the Temporary Plan. To effect this creditable men must be found for the Districts ; the account of the Collections made more simple and uniform ; the Courts and modes of Justice well established ; and the limits of each District, which are strangely intermixed, defined and well distinguished. When this is done the Councils may be withdrawn and the whole controul and authority center where it should be, at the Capital. . . .

No. 10. *Permanent and Temporary Plans of Revenue Reform.*

*Bengal Revenue Consultations*, 5, Range 49, vol. 42, p. 3651.

November 23, 1773.

The Board having at several meetings since the receipt of the *Harcourt's* advices debated on the various means which occurred to them for carrying into execution the intentions of the Hon. Court of Directors for the future controul and manage-

[1] The 'present Chiefships' were Calcutta, Murshidabad, and Dacca.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

ment of the Revenues and for the removal of the Collectors from their stations, and having maturely considered and weighed all the consequences which may attend every measure which may be adopted are of opinion that the immediate removal of the Collectors or the establishment of any consistent and permanent system without such preparatory measures as might prevent the bad consequences of too sudden a change and gradually introduce a more perfect form of superintendency would be hazardous to the Collections and bring at once a greater weight of business on the Members of the superior Administration than they could possibly support :

*Permanent Plan.*

On these grounds they do propose the following Plan for a future Establishment to be adopted and completed by such means as experience shall furnish and the final orders of the Hon. Company shall allow.

1. That the Districts which form the present Collectorships shall remain with such variations as shall render them more easy of controul and more subservient to the general system.

2. That each District be superintended by a Dewan or Aumil, except such as shall have been let entire to Zemindars or other responsible Farmers, who shall in such case be invested with that authority.

3. That a Committee of Revenue be formed at the Presidency which shall consist of two Members of the Board and three senior Servants below the Council for conducting the current business of the Collections in the manner following :

4. The Committee shall meet daily. They shall form resolutions or orders for the current or ordinary business of the Districts, and prepare, weekly or monthly, a separate state of each District ; an account of the demands, receipts and balances of each District ; and a report of such extraordinary occurrences, claims and proposals as may require the orders of the superior Council, which are to be laid before them in their Revenue department.

5. The Dewans shall correspond with the President of the Committee and the Royroyan, and send in their bills, chelans and accounts to them. These shall be registered in the proper offices of the Khalsa ; and such translations and abstracts made of them as shall be necessary for the inspection of the Committee.

6. All orders to the Dewans shall be translated and written in the name of the President of the Committee and the Royroyan, to be sealed with the seal of the Khalsa and signed by them.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

7. Occasional Commissioners or Inspectors shall be deputed to visit such of the districts as may require a local investigation. These shall be chosen from the Company's covenanted servants, not by seniority but by the free election of the Board. They shall be men well qualified for this trust by a knowledge of the Persian or Indostan language and by a moderation of temper.

8. An objection made by a single member of the Board to any person proposed, as wanting of these requisites, shall be a sufficient bar to his appointment without proofs being required to support it. The Commissioners shall receive an allowance of 1,500 r. p. m. for their trouble and for all expenses during their deputation. They shall not be allowed to take with them their private banians nor any servants or dependents without express leave in writing of the Board. They shall be forbid, on pain of suspension from the service, to lend or borrow money, to take any concern in farms, talooks or securities, or to purchase or to sell or contract to purchase or sell any article whatever in the District, nor shall they suffer any of their servants or dependents to do either. Strict orders shall be given in writing to every officer commanding the sepoy stations forbidding them to detach any sepoys either singly or in parties for any purpose whatever beyond their quarters, except when required on military service; to punish or confine any person not appertaining to his command; to lend or borrow money; to take any concern in farms, talooks or securities; to purchase or sell or contract to purchase or sell any article whatever either in the district in which he resides or in any other; or to have any dealings of any kind whatever with any duan, zemindar, farmer or ryot or other dependent or officer of the revenue. The same orders shall be published to be observed by the other officers, both European and Native, of the battalion and to all sepoys and followers of it. It shall be declared that the Commanding Officer shall be responsible for any public breach of these orders by any person whatever under his command. And the Governor shall have power of recalling them without assigning a reason either to them or to the Board.

9. The officers of the Phouzdari Adaulut shall be forbid to hold farms or other offices in the Mofussil. They shall be obliged to reside on pain of forfeiting their employments; and it shall be declared criminal in any person to officiate in the courts of Adaulut in the capacity of Naibs or Gomastahs for principals non-resident.

10. All complaints of reiats or others against Dewans, zemindars, farmers or other public officers of the Revenue

shall be received and decided by the Committee, or by persons expressly appointed by them for that purpose.

For the means of carrying the above plan into execution in such a manner and at such times as may be found most convenient for effecting the purposes intended by it and preventing the ill consequences to which the Collections would be exposed by an improvident and precipitate innovation, resolved that the following plan be immediately adopted to be and to be declared to be only for a temporary purpose.

### *Temporary Plan.*

*Bengal Revenue Consultations*, 5, Range 49, vol. 42, p. 3655.

[*Summary.*]

1. The Provinces to be formed into the following Grand Divisions.
2. First Calcutta, to include Calcutta Pergunnahs, Hugli, Hedgelee, Mysadel, Tumlook, Nuddea, Jessore, Mahmudthy, &c.
3. Second Burdwan.
4. Third Moorshedabad.
5. Fourth Dinagepore.
6. Fifth Dacca.
7. Patna.
8. Chittagong and Tipperah to remain on their present footing under the management of a Chief.
9. A Committee of Revenue to be instituted at Calcutta for superintending the First Grand Division, to be composed of two Members of the Council and 3 senior Servants.
10. The Councils for 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th Divisions to be a Chief and 4 senior Servants.
11. Superintendent of the Khalsa to be abolished when the Provincial Councils are established.
12. The Registry of the Khalsa to remain and the Royroyan.
13. Auditor and Accountant-General to remain; to be independent of the Council of Revenue.
14. A Duan to each Provincial Council to be chosen by the Board.
15. The Provincial Councils to correspond with the Council of Revenue and the Duans with the Royroyan.
16. The Provincial Councils to recommend Naibs for the remote Districts to be nominated by the Board.
17. Naibs to receive orders from the Provincial Councils.
18. The Provincial Councils alone to have public Seals.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

19. Cooch Bahar to be under the direction of the Governor but accounts to go to the Provincial Council.

20. Naibs to hold Courts of Dewanny Adaulut with an appeal to the Provincial Sudder Court.

21. Orders to be issued to the Sepoy Officers to forbid detachments on other than military service, or any dealing with Revenue officers.

22. Officers of Phouzdary Adauluts forbidden to hold farms, &c., and bound to reside in their Districts.

23. Complaints against Phouzdary Officers to go to the Governor and be by him referred to the Sudder Nizamut Adaulut.

24. Members of the superior Councils to be restricted from any kind of Trade whatever and to receive 3000 rupees p. m.

25. Export Warehouse Keepers forbidden to trade in Investment goods.

26. District Covenanted Servants forbidden to make advances for the necessaries of Life, i.e. Grain, Ghee, Oil, Fish, Jute, Matts, Straw, Bamboos, Beetle-nutt and Tobacco.

27. Provincial Councils to enquire particulars of any Taalucks in their neighbourhood not included in their roll.

It being the professed Intention of the Board to make the Plan now adopted subservient to that which they propose for a future and perpetual system. It is their further design that whenever the amounts or arrangements of any one Division shall be so regulated and compleated, as to enable them to bring the controul down to the Presidency, The Provincial Council shall be accordingly withdrawn, and either continue to conduct the Business of the Division at the Presidency, or transfer it at once to the Committee. By such progressive method an easy Change may be Effected, without the Smallest hazard of any Loss or Embarrassment, at the same time that a Provision is made for the admission of such other improvements as the Hon. Court of Directors may enjoin, and which would either be precluded by any other mode or the new Measures which may have been Established must be abolished to make room for them, which would occasion fresh Perplexities in the Revenue, and fill the minds of the People with Apprehensions of perpetual Changes.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

# CHAPTER X

## JUSTICE

Problem and principles of reform—Adaptation of Native Courts—District and Sudder Courts established—Native code retained—Arbitration—The Mayor's Court—Effect of Reforms—Confusion caused by Regulating Act—Permanence of Hastings's measures—Conclusion.

UNDER native rule there were two main channels of Justice: the Diwan dealt with civil cases; the Nazim exercised authority over criminals; but their jurisdiction was not clearly distinguished, and by 1772 these two channels were confused by the increase of subordinate Courts and the atrophy of the higher ones, while the influence of the Company's servants overshadowed and in large measure paralysed such powers as remained. Those of the Naib-Nazim, like his master's, the Nawab's, had gone to nothing,[1] while the functions of the inferior Courts had become inextricably confounded. The Committee of Circuit enumerates ten officers of Justice with their respective Courts as having a nominal existence.[2]

I. The Nazim in the Roy Adalut [to deal with capital crimes].

II. The Diwan [nominally to deal with questions of landed property].

III. The Darogo Adalut al Aalea, deputy for the Nazim [to deal with property causes, exclusive of land, inheritance, &c., and with libels].

IV. The Darogo Adalut Diwani, deputy of the Diwan, [deals actually with questions of landed property].

[1] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. iv, p. 346.

[2] The office of Nazim, including control of military forces and the exercise of criminal jurisdiction, was the original function of the Nawab-Nazim; but as the Nawab's independence of the Mogul Empire grew and he became Prince of Bengal instead of military governor of a Province, he delegated his original duties to a subordinate called the Naib, i.e. Deputy Nazim.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

V. The Faujdar (police officer and judge of crimes not capital).[1]

VI. The Kasi (judge in questions of inheritance and officer for registration of marriages, &c.).

VII. The Mohtesib (officer for dealing with cases of drunkenness, false weights, &c.).

VIII. The Mufti, expounder of Mohammedan Law (acting only as a referee, originally the Kasi's superior).

IX. The Kanungo, a land registrar and keeper of records (acting only as a referee).

X. The Kotwal (an officer responsible for the keeping of the peace at night).

Of all these Courts and officials only IV and V, the Courts of the Darogo Diwani and the Faujdar were of practical utility. In Justice as in Revenue everything was based ultimately on the land tenures, which fixed the position and the liabilities of the parties according to the terms of their sanads, amalnamas or pottahs, or in agreement with customary rights. Consequently all litigation tended to be referred eventually to the Court of the Darogo Adalut Diwani, the chief officer for questions of land settlement and revenue. But in our period the desuetude of all native provincial authority created a situation so grave as to justify Hastings's first impression that the

[1] Hastings draws a distinction between the Faujdar and the Faujdari Court, which does not seem very easy in its application at all times. He says that the Faujdari Courts are Courts instituted for the trial of all crimes and misdemeanours, while the Faujdars are officers appointed to guard the peace of the country and to seize all offenders against it. They consign such persons to the Faujdari Courts. This transfer is the only communication which one office has with the other, their proceedings and their authority being totally distinct and independent. Without an appreciation of this distinction it is hard to understand Hastings's proposals for repressing Dacoity. It is there proposed to renew the extinct office of Faujdars, whereas the Faujdari Courts had already been set on a firm basis in 1772, two years earlier. Yet it would seem that Faujdar was, at least in common parlance, the term for the judge of the Faujdari Court. Hastings himself uses it so in the following verse:

'For ease the harassed Foujdar prays,
When crowded courts and sultry days
Exhale the noxious fume,
While poring o'er the cause he hears
The lengthened lie, and doubts and fears
The culprit's final doom.'

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

land was without any courts of Justice; for the seat of the Courts enumerated above was at Murshidabad and their range only extended a short way beyond the bounds of the city. In the districts, where they had functioned well enough early in the century, native authority was now mainly confined to objects of self-interest, as in the case of the Kanungoes. The only live Court in the countryside seems to have been the Cutcheri, or Zemindar's office, where complaints were constantly preferred and a rough-and-ready type of justice sometimes administered. Those who wielded this capricious magisterial authority were the Zemindars, Farmers of the rents, Shicdars, and other Revenue officers. The House of Commons Committee which in 1772 enumerated the native Courts pronounced this expedient to be at least better than total anarchy in the country-side, while they deplored the necessity for it as being liable to the greatest oppressions.

The power of the Diwani made it possible for Hastings to bring order into this chaos. He was clear as to the principles to be followed; they are stated and defended in his 'Regulations proposed for the Government', Nos. 8, 9, and 10.[1] The first essential in his eyes was to retain the native magistracy and codes of law, recorded and oral, to which the people were accustomed. There was no principle which he held more tenaciously than this: that a nation is the only safe judge of its own liberties, and that for any foreign authority, however enlightened, to impose law on a people according to its own alien standards is to commit injustice. As was said of the American 'rebels' at the time, 'Liberty is what they hold to be such', and to enforce on the Hindus a code borrowed from a nation in a totally different stage of civilization was a greater hardship than to allow the anomalies and imperfections of their own laws to continue. He made it his aim then to correct the defects without destroying the traditions of the native systems. Their estimate of crime, it is true, differed sometimes in essentials from the European standard, and Hastings was careful, on that account, to preserve to the supreme power the right to intervene in critical cases. He

[1] *Vide* pp. 157, 158.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

himself, with English advisers, reviewed the decisions of the Sudder Faujdari or Nizamut, and where the native sentence traversed the plain sense of English justice it was corrected by the authority of the President and Council. This Nizamut was the new Court of Appeal in criminal jurisdiction set up by the Plan of Justice of 1772. Hastings with the Committee of Circuit drew up this Plan on August 15, 1772, at Kasimbazar.[1]

The old Courts which had proved useless were thereby superseded, but those which could be adapted were preserved. Hastings took the small district as his administrative unit in every branch and required a Criminal and a Civil Court in each district. To this purpose he utilized the existing Courts of the Darogo Adalut Diwani, better known as the Mofussil or provincial Diwani, for civil causes, and the Faujdari Adalut for crimes and misdemeanours. By this means he afforded to the ryot an easy access to the seat of Justice, involving small cost and no absence from his district, and these Courts soon proved their value and were retained in subsequent reorganizations. The matters cognizable in either Court were clearly defined so as at once to simplify and reconcile the conflicting jurisdictions of the former Courts and to prevent any overlapping of the distinct authorities of Faujdar and Diwan. The objects of their jurisdiction were thus assigned:

i. Mofussil Adalut Diwani. (For civil causes.)

*a.* Property, real or personal.
*b.* Inheritance, marriage or caste disputes.
*c.* Debt, contracts, rents, &c.

'But from this distribution is excepted the right of succession to Zemindaris and Talucdaris, which shall be left to the decision of the President and Council.'

This exception secured to the Government the power, which it would otherwise have lost, to reconstruct the Land Settlement when the Five Years' Lease System should elapse.

ii. The Faujdari Adalut. (For criminal jurisdiction; this appears to have been formed by a blending of the powers of

[1] Vide *Committee of Circuit*, pp. 181 and 241.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

the former superior Court (III) of Adalut al Aalea with that in which the Faujdar had presided (V).)

*a.* Cases of murder, robbery, theft, &c.
*b.* Felonies, forgery, perjury.
*c.* Assaults, frays, quarrels, adultery, and every other breach of the peace or trespass.

In this Court the judge had power to inflict corporal punishment, imprisonment, work on the roads (an old-established form of punishment in India), and fines of small amount. Sentence of confiscation and of capital punishment had, however, to be referred to the superior authority, the Court of Sudder Adalut at Calcutta, before they could be executed on the offenders.

By the provision of these local Courts the need for the dubious magistracy of the Zemindar and the tyranny which it involved were done away: only one remnant of such authority was left. The head farmer of each pargana was to settle on the spot small disputes, up to the value of ten rupees, arising between the ryots, 'as they cannot afford nor ought they to be allowed, on every mutual disagreement, to travel to the Sudder Cutcherry for justice'. But care was taken to hinder these local worthies from becoming petty tyrants. They were given no power to punish or fine and were themselves made liable to complaints brought against them in the newly instituted District Courts, a locked box to receive such complaints being provided outside each Cutcheri. For economic reasons it was forbidden to summon cultivators to the District Courts, except in urgent cases, during the four months Bhadoom, Assin, Augun, and Poos (December to March), when they were most needed in their fields.

Above this local jurisdiction, which provided a means of redress for the villager, Hastings put the coping-stone to his system in the Sudder Courts at Calcutta, which were to be Courts of Appeal from the District Diwani and Faujdari Courts. In the Sudder Diwani civil appeals were to be heard by the President and two Councillors, assisted by the Diwan of the Khalsa (i. e. the Royroyan), the head Kanungoes, and other

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

officers of the Cutcheri. In the Sudder Faujdari criminal appeals and capital sentences were investigated by the Nazim's deputy, the chief Kasi and Mufti, and three Moulavies or Mahomedan doctors of the law. If by them sanctioned, the sentences received the Nawab's formal warrant and returned to the District Court for execution. The President and Council, however, reserved to themselves a right of control over the decisions of this Court, generally known as the Nizamut, 'so that the Company's Administration, in character of the King's Diwan, may be satisfied that the decrees of Justice are not injured or perverted by partiality or corruption '.[1]

Besides these new Courts and the regulations for their conduct the reforms included the laying down of certain general principles for improving the practice of the law. The chief of these were :

*a*. The recording of all procedure in the Courts of every degree.
*b*. A time limit set to all litigation, to prevent the raking up of old grievances. This had been a customary check on litigiousness both with Mahomedans and Hindus.
*c*. The abolition of legal 'Chout' and heavy fines.
*d*. The inhibition of the creditor's right of jurisdiction in his own cause, as in the case of Zemindars, Kanungoes, &c.
*e*. The encouragement of arbitration to settle cases of disputed property.

The last had originated in a recommendation made by the Committee of the House of Commons which in 1771 made an inquiry into the methods of justice prevailing in Bengal. The Directors had instructed Cartier and his Council in consequence to adopt this fashion of composing disputes : they attempted it, but with little success, for arbitration was found to be unsuited to the habits and ideas of the people. Hindus were untrained in the sense of mutual responsibility and local organization which are inherent in the texture of the simplest

[1] The authority of the Diwan could be no real justification for intervention in the doings of the Nizamut, but is of course cited to give a colour to it in uninstructed native eyes. The evident need to retain this control in English hands appears in the account of cases. *Vide* pp. 332, 334.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

English community. The conceptions of fair play and impartiality which these have bred in the native of Great Britain were foreign to India and the very opposite of the Oriental attitude of subservience and sycophancy which is bound to prevail in countries ruled despotically for centuries. Impartial arbitrators proved hard to find, and even where reliable men were available there was no inducement to them to act. The principle of arbitration was consequently retained in Hastings's system only as an aid to the decision of disputes as to landed property.

Another disputed question was the position of the Mayor's Court. It had been instituted by charter in the early years of the settlement to protect and control the Company's servants in their dealings with one another and against the claims of the native officials. By the charter of 1726 its authority was vested in the Mayor and Aldermen of Calcutta, with a right of appeal to the Governor and Council and finally to the King in Council. But the terms of its institution were so ill-defined that its powers, their range, and the laws they were to enforce seem all to have been open to dispute. Should its authority be confined to Calcutta, or extend with the spread of the original Settlement to the whole of Bengal? Was the term British to include native subjects of the British Company? and if so, were they amenable to the laws of England? Thus in an inquiry on this subject by the Committee of the House of Commons[1] a witness maintained: 'Although this Court cannot legally issue process beyond the bounds of Calcutta or its subordinate factories, yet he had known their processes executed in all parts of Bengal under special order of the Governor and Council, granted or refused at their discretion,' and 'he had known natives sent from every part of the country to that court'; further he said, 'the judges are not persons educated to the law, but any of the Junior Servants: he had heard it frequently declared by some of the judges that the Mayor's Court had nothing to do with the laws of England and that the accused (who was at that time Mayor) would not sit there to hear the laws of England named; or to that

[1] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. iv, p. 331.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

purpose and effect.' This witness held that the judges were removable at the pleasure of the President and Council, but this was denied by one of the defendants. Hastings had no authority to reform this Court, but could only do his best to prevent abuse of its authority. As he had supported its jurisdiction to enforce order among officers of the army, he now refused to allow Mr. Lushington, an influential and valuable member of the Revenue Department, to use its powers for his private ends by summoning before it a Zemindar on whom he had claims. The native was liberated on bail, but no final decision of the points at issue could be reached except by appeal to the Court of Directors, to fix and define the scope and powers of the Court.

Meanwhile the new Courts of Justice were working well, with speed and regularity. The chief blot on this, as on the Settlement reform, was the necessity to leave too much power lodged in the District collector. In the Mofussil Adalut Diwani he presided and had a supervising authority over the Faujdar; but with the creation of the Provincial Councils the collectors' supremacy was restrained. On the whole, Hastings was satisfied that only time was needed to prove the value and soundness of his system. But time was denied. Before an appreciation of the new order of things in Bengal could spread beyond the limited circle of the Directors to influence public opinion in England, it was undermined by the parliamentary move of North's Regulating Act, a drastic reconstruction of the whole government of India, inspired by political rather than economic motives, and induced less by a study of the letters from Bengal than of the balance sheets of the Company. American dispatches were not the only ones that were overlooked by an eighteenth-century administration, and if the loss of the American colonies is not to be placed solely to North's account, neither can he be acquitted of sorely hampering the man to whom his contemporaries owed the retention of India.

Not that reforms were unneeded; but those who knew the reality of the need should have been consulted how to meet it. Hastings had all along been urging his employers to form their

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

government on a more capable plan. He declared to Sir G. Colebrooke the necessity of:

*a.* Distinguishing the powers of the Council, the Select Committee, and the Governor.

*b.* Substituting for the nominal authority of the Governor a degree of active control.[1]

And he suggested means to secure these improvements. He insisted that the Governor ought to have a long tenure of office: 'God forbid that the Government of this fine country should continue to be a mere chair for a triennial succession of indigent adventurers to sit and hatch private fortunes in'; and wrote: 'I am certain that at some period not far distant the powers which I have solicited will be given, whether it be my lot or that of another to possess them; for it will be found impossible for a Government as extensive as this is to subsist in a divided power.' The claim is bold, but consistent with his own practice of giving ample powers and a free hand to the responsible officer. The constitutional checks and balancings of parliamentary machinery were unsuited to the character of the Indian territories; the history of the next eighty years proved the necessity for a strong hand over them. It was a lawgiver and not merely laws that was wanted; above all, not the laws of another people. The failure of a representative government to grasp the requirements of an unrepresented Empire could hardly be more clearly shown than in Lord North's application of the panacea of British Laws, laid on with insular complacency to heal the wounds dealt to Bengal mainly by British intrusion.

North was the minister who had sanctioned Hastings's appointment and who was to maintain him in office for another decade, but he was far from aiding him by the new Act. It had two aims: to regulate the Company's financial position, and to assert the Crown's right to supervise the government of its territories. With the former object the Company's annual payment of £400,000 interest on a loan, granted by Parliament in 1772, was remitted until a fresh loan of £1,400,000

[1] Gleig, vol. i, p. 291.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

should have been paid off. To secure this the Court was forbidden to raise its dividend above 6% or to accept unlimited bills contracted in India; it was further bound to export a given amount of British goods each year and to submit its accounts to the Treasury. The control of Indian government was secured by the appointment of a Governor-General and Council of four by Parliament, to be renewed by the Court of Directors with the sanction of the Crown; political matters coming before the Directors were to be submitted to the Crown; and a Chief Justice with three Puisne Judges, appointed by the Crown at fixed salaries, were to constitute a Supreme Judicature for Bengal. One accession was made to the power of Hastings in giving him control over the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay, but in his Council his authority was weakened. The reduction of its membership to five realized Hastings's warning by making it far easier for a hostile majority to maintain its cohesion and opposition; the Governor-General then became a tool in their hands. To this galling position Hastings found himself at once reduced. His past measures were censured and where possible repealed, his agents displaced, and his hopes of carrying further reforms brought to an end for the time being. Until he recovered the casting vote in 1776 he could effect comparatively little; it was the more fortunate that he had already done so much that the internal administration of the provinces could run on comparatively smooth lines even while the guiding power was in abeyance.

In the sphere of Justice this was peculiarly the case. Hastings had written to his old ally, Dupré, 'We have been very unfortunate in the time which we have chosen for our judicial improvements, for we cannot undo what we have done, and if the Lord Chief Justice and his judges should come amongst us with their institutes the Lord have mercy upon us'. Happily for Bengal, while the Regulating Act set up this fresh machinery its framers were too unconscious of the existing one to abolish it. Consequently Hastings's Courts continued to work on as steadily as the friction in Council allowed while the Lord Chief Justice set up his new judiciary in Calcutta. Impey was an old friend of Hastings and had already begun to

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

enter into his views before the inevitable friction between their Courts became dangerous. He was thus ready to concert with him a way out of the deadlock by assuming control of both systems and lending his technical skill to throw into legal form a new Plan of Justice which Hastings had prepared to reconcile, as far as might be, the rival systems. It was sent home in 1776, but never passed into law.[1] The Courts of 1772, however, continued to exist, and in 1780 a new code of Regulations re-embodied those of 1772. They were reaffirmed in the Revised Code of 1793, and are still in force, although qualified in their application by the Act of 1833.[2] The year 1780 thus saw the fruition of Hastings's aims both in the sphere of the Land Settlement and Revenue and in that of Justice, the two pillars on which rest the administrative edifice of Bengal, and which made his influence a permanent if not paramount one in the future government of the country.

The work which Warren Hastings did in a career of thirty-five years in India raises him above praise or detraction. By a gradual and steady growth the ideals which he sought have come to prevail: his is 'the glory of going on and still to be'.

We should praise any man who in so short a time extricated a great commercial enterprise from such failure as at that time threatened the East India Company; Hastings deserves this praise, but he deserves more. We should acclaim the general whose foresight saved an empire for his country. Bengal, when Hastings assumed control, was ready to collapse with sheer rottenness; he purified it and made it the source of strength for the older Presidencies; he deserves this tribute too. But this is still only a part of his achievements. He found the English in Bengal a source of disease and misery to the country, apparently incapable of cure: he turned them into a spring of new life which brought integrity and vigour into its government, humanity into its law courts, freedom into its markets. He found the natives themselves, quite apart from the intrusion of the English, hopelessly divided.

[1] *House of Commons Reports*, vol. vi.
[2] Ilbert, *The Government of India*, pp. 59, 84.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Had there been no Plassey, Bengal must still have been a prey to anarchy; rival princes disputed the throne, marauders drained the most fertile provinces, official corruption and greed exploited instead of protecting the peasantry. All this was transformed by Hastings: a firm authority was set up, enemies were shut out, and, above all, the long-suffering ryot, whose cause Hastings had ever most at heart, learnt that he could work his land unhindered and enjoy a fair share of its fruits, and that the poor as well as the great could get a hearing and receive justice. It is this determination to protect the down-trodden cultivator more than any other single thing that stamps Hastings as a statesman. It served him as a clue through the labyrinth of Bengal's disorders: holding this fast he was able to do more than save the English power in Bengal; he saved Bengal itself.

But it is impossible to review Hastings's career without becoming conscious of the conditions that ruled his age. By the eighteenth century England had in the main found herself. Her Nationality had long since reached its development, Liberty was accepted in theory as the principle of British citizenship, and she had already for a century and a half begun to sow the seeds of Empire. Yet in the eighteenth century and even at its close these three great principles were but half realized. Men were still barely conscious of the meaning of National Life; the magnates still disputed the right of a free press and a wide franchise, and the Government still looked on the colonies as mere sources of unearned increment to the mother country. The East India Company displays these features as in a model. In it the sons and grandsons of Elizabeth's sea-captains found an outlet for their ventures, and the clash of their interests with those of Dutch and French rivals reacted on their countrymen in a quickened sense of England's claims. The Company, unwarlike as were the cargoes in its bluff hulls, forged some of the strongest links that make the chain of English seamanship one, from the raids of Drake to the victories of Rodney and Nelson. Through the everyday adventures of such men as Cartwright and Charnock, and just because to them adventure was an everyday occurrence, the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

nation began to know itself for a sea-power. Again, English colonial ventures were not state-ordained like those of Louis XIV. Nowhere perhaps was British liberty more real than in the unrestricted life of her great trading companies. Once licensed by the State they were left to sink or swim, to adapt themselves as best they might to the strange conditions of alien countries while holding all the faster to their home traditions and planting in the new soil the germs of British civilization. Thus the penetration of India was rather a natural growth than a conquest; at Plassey indeed it burst into open life, but the commercial sheathing in which the empire of India lay hid was not cast off for another century. Hastings was before all things the respectful servant of the Company and a civilian at heart. He took his part in the campaign of Plassey, but he spent year after year, before and after that event, steadily accumulating a fine and intimate knowledge of the Indian peoples, their economic life, their religions and their government. In this diligent service he did not however lose sense of proportion or lower his vision from the world-wide interests of both lands, and in him the policy that drew the Governor of India from the counting-house was for once justified. It was a doubtful policy, for the statesman within did not usually survive the forces of commercialism without, and it was bound to change with the changing fortunes of the Company; Hastings's successor, Lord Cornwallis, came from among England's magnates in order that he might be above the influences of patronage and able to resist, as he did, even the recommendation of the Prince of Wales, and govern rather for the public good than for the Company's. And Hastings, servant and nominee of the Company as he was, showed himself in this superior to his age, that he withstood the forces of influence in the interests of Bengal, and though he himself succumbed to them in the end, he had proved himself able, whether from personal ability or the instinct for leadership, to rise to the height demanded of the first English ruler of a great part of India. It was this capability for government that enabled him to shake off the submissive attitude of the eighteenth-century client to his patrons when they failed to

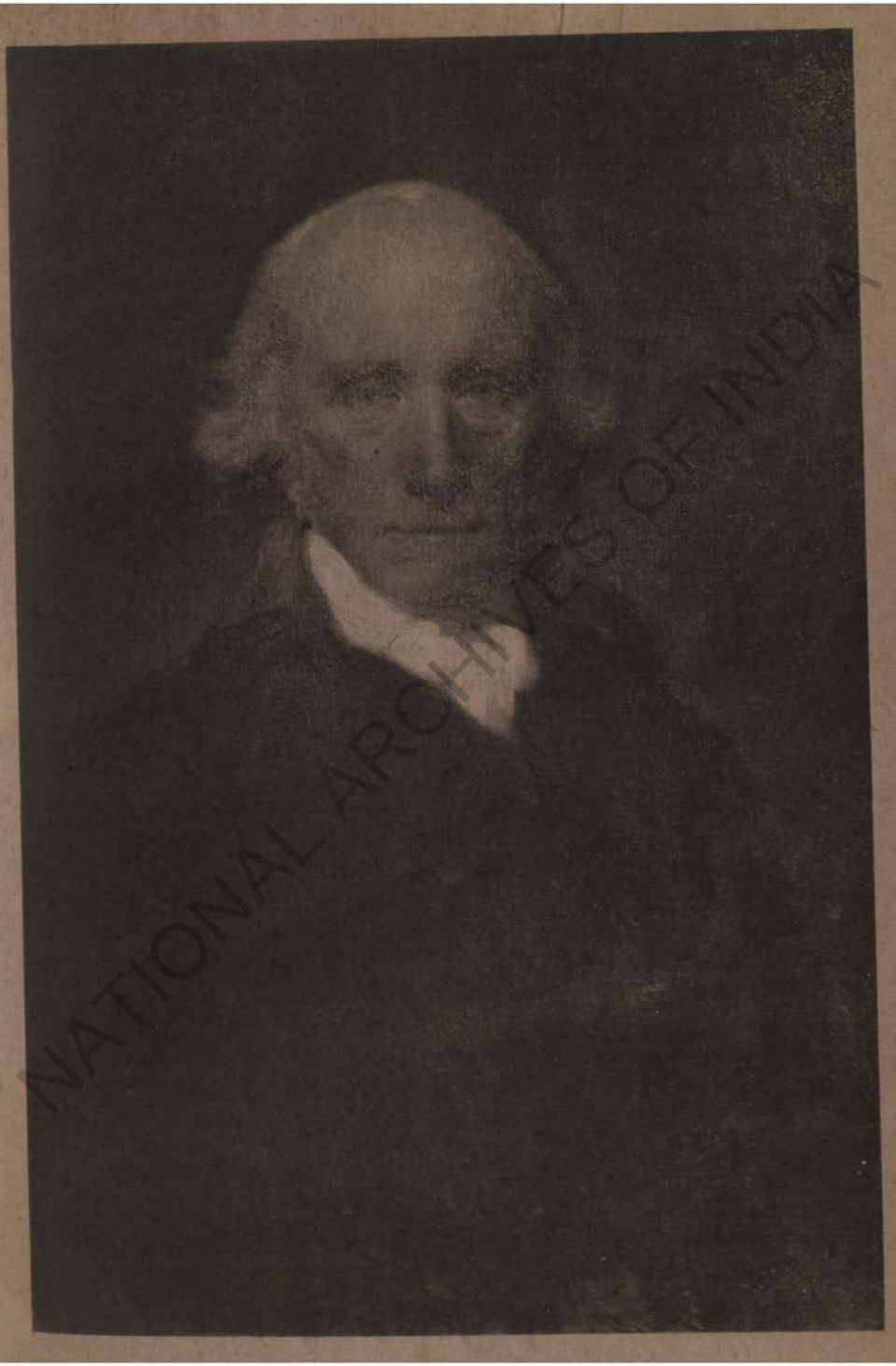


NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

realize the country's needs; to resist and denounce corruption, even in the Directors' protégés; to stem the flood of high-born cadets which they were pouring into Bengal; and to depose the Collectors from their precious vantage-ground. But while he was eager to root out and to break with the shams and anomalies that had prevailed, he was not content with negative nor with half-measures. For over a decade the Company had attempted to suppress privileges and oppressions like the dustuk; Clive had been given dictatorial powers; but what had been done? Hastings in a year put down dustuks, chokeys, the excesses of Kanungoes, Amils and collectors, Boards that 'did not meet', Pargana sepoys who robbed and beat the peasants. And in this cleansing process Hastings abolished nothing that could be of use. While with one hand he purged, with the other he built up, using native materials, restoring old institutions wherever they were sound enough to be made progressive. It is, indeed, a fair criticism to say of his administration that he did not reform Bengal, but only gave free play to the vital powers latent in the ancient Indian fabric. Such criticism is, however, the highest praise. The power to conserve precedent order as a basis for higher law is the test of true statesmanship, and in the work of 1772 Hastings shows this essentially English quality in marked degree, making, like Pitt, his aim security, stability, the restoration of the old order as an introduction to the new.

For the rule of Hastings was the beginning of a new order in the East. As in its economic experience the Company found it impossible to retain the shibboleths of the mercantile theory and in its own practice adopted the line of 'free and open trade', a step forward which Adam Smith was simultaneously urging on the Anglo-Saxon world: so by governing with a single eye to the good of the governed, Hastings affirmed a new principle, left behind him the age of exploitation, and opened the new channel to the empire of united British Dominions Overseas. It is significant that the lesson of imperial responsibility hardly learned in the American War was driven home through India. Just when it was proved

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA


NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

fatal to the continuance of dominion in the West to exploit the colonies, at that very decade in the East the self-interested character of the trading Company was exposed and the reins of government taken out of its hands by Pitt's Act, while the seven years' trial of Warren Hastings, though it proved him innocent, warned the nation what Justice would demand of the guilty and displayed in his administration a new standard of uprightness at the same time as it formulated clearly the maxims which can alone justify such a domination as ours in India.

The policy of self-interest that lost us America had been discarded only just in time in Bengal, and when the shock of that severance reverberated through the West it left the East unshaken. The effect of the administrative measures of Hastings was security, loyalty, and wealth, and when the strain of the American, French, Maratha, and Mysore wars came, the fruit of his government was reaped. Bengal paid and largely furnished the troops that were to hold the other Presidencies. Her people showed themselves no sullen, beaten crowd, but men awaking from the lethargy of oppression to a new freedom. That such a man as Chet Sing rebelled proved only how those who had risen through extortion felt the new restraints, while in the Governor-General's escape and quick recovery of prestige may be measured the general approval of his acts. The key to this change lies in the new standard set up by Hastings and his fellow workers : Sykes, Becher, the Vansittarts, Verelst, Shore, all in their measure helped to found the traditions of a Service through which, for over a hundred years, England has displayed the significance that lies for her in the terms Nationality, Liberty, and Empire.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

## APPENDIX TO CHAPTER X

### No. 1. *Plan for the Administration of Justice.*

*Committee of Circuit*, p. 241.

[*Summary.*]

Cossimbazar, August 15, 1772.

1. In each District shall be established 2 Courts of Judicature:

(i) Mofussil Dewannee Adaulut.

(ii) Phoujdaree Adaulut.

2. Matters cognizable:

(i) In the Dewannee,—All disputes concerning Property, Inheritance, Marriage, Caste, Debt and Rent.

(ii) In the Phoujdaree,—All cases of Murder, Robbery, Theft, Forgery, Perjury, and Breaches of the Peace.

3. In the Dewannee Court is to preside the Collector of the District, attended by the provincial Dewan and officers of the Cutcheri; it is to meet twice in each week.

4. In the Phoujdaree Court the Cauzee and Muftee of the District and two Moulavies shall sit to expound the Law, but the Collector shall also attend to see that evidence is summoned and examined.

5. In like manner 2 Superior Courts of Judicature shall be established at the chief seat of Government:

(i) The Dewannee Sudder Adaulut.

(ii) The Nizamut Sudder Adaulut.

6. The Dewannee Sudder Adaulut shall receive appeals from the provincial Dewannee Adaulut. The President and 2 Members of the Council shall preside therein, aided by the Dewan of the Khalsa, head Canongoes, and officers of the Cutcheri.

7. A Chief Officer of Justice, appointed on the part of the Nazim, shall preside in the Nizamut Adaulut by the title of Daroga Adaulut, assisted by the Cauzee and Muftee and 3 Moulavies, to revise all proceedings of the provincial Adaulut and in capital cases signifying their approbation, to prepare the sentence for the warrant of the Nazim, which shall be returned into the Mofussil and there executed. They are to act under the control of the Chief and Council.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

8. Subordinate Courts are to be set up at Calcutta as well as the Sudder Courts.

9. The Collectors shall at all times be ready to receive the petitions of the injured; a box to be placed at the door of the Cutcheri for such petitions.

10. Persons are not to be summoned from the Farmed lands at times of harvest except on urgent affairs.

11. All causes of Property under the value of 10r. are to be tried by the Head Farmer of each pargana.

12. Process in the provincial Dewannee Adaulut to be as follows:

(i) File and read petition.
(ii) Allot fixed time for defendant to answer.
(iii) Hear the parties viva voce and examine evidence.
(iv) Pass decree.

13. Complete records are to be kept and copies given to both parties free of expense and a copy transmitted to the Sudder Dewannee.

14. Each Collector to keep an abstract record in English.

15. No complaints of over 12 years standing are to be heard. Any party going from one Court to another to create delay is to be non-suited.

16. Chout and all fines are to be abolished.

17. To prevent excessive litigation frivolous complaints may be punished by a fine of 5 r. or by 20 lashes.

18. Fixed adjustments arranged for interest on old debts.

19. All bonds to be executed in the presence of two witnesses.

20. No authority to be exercised in future by creditors over their debtors; Collectors are charged to prevent it.

21. In cases of disputed property where local investigation is required, an Aumin chosen by consent of both parties is to decide and the Collector is to see that no delay or extraordinary expense is incurred.

22. Disputed accounts, contracts, &c. recommended to be submitted to arbitrators to be chosen by the parties. These will not be paid for the service, but the Collector is to encourage them by any means to perform it.

23. Questions concerning Inheritance, Marriage, Caste, to be invariably settled agreeably to the dictates of the Koran or Shaster.

24. The decree of the Provincial Dewannee Adaulut to be final for causes not exceeding 500 r. in value.

25. The Court may award costs.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

26. Groundless appeals are to be punishable by enhanced costs, the proceeds to go to the Respondent.

27. Complete Records to be kept and transmitted from the Phoujdaree Adaulut to the Nizamut Sudder Adaulut twice per mensem.

28. The Collector to keep an abstract.

29. The authority of the Phoujdaree Adaulut may punish by flogging, imprisonment, road-work, and fines, but not by capital punishment.

30. Petty misdemeanours committed by persons whose Rank, Caste or Station exempts them from corporal punishment may be fined up to 100 r. in the Phoujdaree Adaulut.

31. Forfeiture and confiscation of convicted felons can only be pronounced by the Sudder Nizamut Adaulut.

32. Phoujdaree Bazee Jumma is abolished, such offences to be punished by stripes or damages to the party injured.

33. The Cauzee, Muftee, &c. are to receive monthly salaries in lieu of fees.

34. The office of Yetasaub is abolished, to be replaced by two deputies for the Cauzee and Muftee, to be from the district within one day's journey of the ryots.

35. Dacoits are to be executed in their own villages, which shall be fined and their families made slaves of the State.

36. Tannadars and Pykes to be dismissed for neglect and encouraged by rewards of land, payment or privileges.

37. Collectors authorized to make further local regulations which are to be reported to the Committee of Circuit for their sanction, and particularly to prevent the servants of the Courts from levying fees or fines.

## No. 2. *The new Calcutta Courts of Justice of* 1772.

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xi, p. 229; Revenue Department.

January 6, 1773.

Para. 5. In our former address of this season we had the honor to lay before you a Plan for the Administration of Justice throughout the Country and for forming Judicial Courts in each Province, from whose decrees an Appeal should lay [*sic*] immediately to Calcutta. We have since established the Courts of Justice at the Presidency, the Nizamut and the Sudder Dewanni.

Para. 6. The former has been fixed at this place agreeably to our original intention of confirming the decrees of the inferior, Provincial and Criminal Courts, and the greatest care

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

has been taken in selecting persons the most able and conversant in the Mahometan Laws to sit as judges in this Court. Their appointment has been confirmed by sunnuds from the Nabob, for the sake of preserving the ancient and constitutional forms of the country Government, and their sentence in capital cases will be transmitted to him for a warrant for execution.

At another period the continuance of these forms might have been considered as too great a concession to the Nabob and a dangerous acknowledgement of his supremacy, but these objections can have no weight at present as the Nabob is entirely under the control of Government, and in case any inconvenience should be found to arise from it, the institution may be easily altered.

(At Calcutta.) The Inferior Courts are formed as nearly as circumstances would admit on the model of those in the Provinces, with the addition of some officers which the extent and importance of their jurisdiction required. As the late judicial Court of Cutcheri is by this establishment become unnecessary it has been abolished and the jurisdiction of the Dewanni Adaulut for matters of Property in the first instance has been extended over the City of Calcutta and the 24 Pergunnahs. . . .

The removal of the Khalsa with its several offices to Calcutta has, as we foresaw, tended greatly to the increase of the inhabitants, who being composed of different nations and religions are more liable to disorders and more difficult to restrain. The Natives from living under the immediate protection and freedom of the English Government gradually acquire an independent and untractable spirit, while the many European and other foreigners without families or homes who crowd our streets are continually guilty of excesses and irregularities.

To provide a remedy for these evils we have substituted a Phouzdari Adaulut nearly similar to the Zemindari Court, which is now abolished, for the trial of all crimes and misdemeanours, in which a Member of your Board is to preside in rotation, and we hope from his high rank in your service that his decisions will be attended to with deference by the Natives, at the same time that his authority as Justice of the Peace puts him in a situation to enforce the laws of England, where Europeans are concerned, without any delay or inconvenience. For his assistance we have added a subsidiary Court, to take cognizance of such offences as may not require the presence of the President.

The establishment of these several Courts and the Regula-

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

tions we have circulated throughout the Country will, we hope, be productive of the desired effect by introducing by degrees a general system of free and impartial Justice.

## No. 3. *The Mayor's Court.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xii, p. 93; Public Department.

November 10, 1773.

Para. 27. Rajah Kissen Chund, the Zemindar of Nuddea, being at the Presidency, to which he was summoned on the business of his Zemindari, was arrested in the public streets by a writ of the Mayor's Court at the suit of Mr. Lushington.

Para. 28. As this was the first instance in our knowledge of any of the Rajahs under the Country Government being made amenable to our British Courts it became an object of our Consultation.

After duly considering the Charter of Justice we declined coming to an opinion on the competency of the Court, reflecting that this point might come before us in our judicial capacity by way of Appeal.

But we thought it highly incumbent on us to call Mr. Lushington to account for a step so unprecedented and so detrimental in its tendency to the Company's interest. Were the Zemindars subject to be arrested on their attendance at the Khalsa for the business of their districts, the collections must suffer and in cases of tedious confinement the whole year's revenue might be lost. Besides we can easily suppose, knowing the intrigues of these men, that collusive suits against them might be instigated by themselves and undertaken to serve as pretexts for the deficiencies and non-payment of their arrears.

On these grounds we judged that Mr. Lushington had acted in a most unjustifiable as well as unprecedented manner, preferring in this instance his private interest in a matter of small importance to him, to that of his employers, and in contempt of the authority of this government without any previous application to them seeking redress in a new channel which could not fail to create confusion in the Administration of the Revenue.

Para. 29. Mr. Lushington being called upon endeavoured to justify the act . . . as if they had dismissed a servant for having recourse to the laws of his country as Mr. Lushington himself expressed on the occasion in the presence of the Board. We contented ourselves with recording our sense of his conduct

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

and reporting the whole to you that you might see what a disagreeable dilemma the conduct of one of your servants has brought upon your affairs—the credit and justice of your Administration.

Para. 30. To prevent further inconvenience accruing to the public business from others following the example of Mr. Lushington, as the Rajah we understood labored under many other Incumbrances, we resolved to give bail for his standing suit and ordered him to return to his province. Your explicit opinion and orders will be highly necessary for our future guidance in such cases. In the meantime we have published a proclamation forbidding all your servants under pain of dismission to lend money to the Zemindars under any pretence whatsoever and requiring all persons who have claims against them to recur to the ordinary Courts of the Country for Justice.

No. 4. *Hastings's letter to the Revenue Board on the subject of Criminal Law.*

*Bengal Revenue Consultations*, 4, Range 49, vol. 41, p. 2762.

August 3, 1773.

Para. 2. It was not without much difficulty and great delay that I could prevail upon the officers of the Nizamut Adaulut to open their new Court, into which at their earnest solicitation I went in person to introduce them. I should have been better pleased to have dispensed with this ceremony, from a desire of precluding every appearance of the influence of our Government in the exercise of so sacred a charge. On the same principle I have also cautiously abstained from every act of authority over that Court except in requiring them to attend to their functions and in looking over their sentences, on which, though I have ventured to offer them my opinion and supported it by the strongest arguments which occurred to me, yet I have always left them at full liberty to follow the unbiassed dictates of their own judgements; a delicacy which I esteem due to the characters of the persons who preside in that department, and which the deference too servilely paid to authority in this despotic country renders yet more requisite in the proceedings of a Court of Judicature professedly acting in obedience to the strict letter of the law. As the decrees of the Sudder Adaulut were likely to become a precedent for all future cases to which they might be applied, I was at some pains and employed much time in revising them in the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

presence of the Darogo. Such of its decrees as appeared to me disproportionate to the offences committed, or liable in their effects to prove hurtful to the peace and good order of society, I ventured to recommend to the Court for their reconsideration. The proceedings were returned to me, some with the former sentences confirmed and others with the different interpretations of the law annexed to them, and a reference to the Nazim for his final decision upon them. They were accordingly transmitted to the Nabob by the Darogo of the Adaulut and accompanied by a letter from myself requesting that he would affix his warrant to them without more delay. At the same time I sent to Mr. Middleton an abstract of the Proceedings with my own opinion and remarks upon it, and desired him to communicate them to the Begum, before the sentences should receive the Nabob's warrant for their execution. . . .

I again repeat that the establishment is yet but in its infancy, and that with every other innovation it is liable to unavoidable delays until the first difficulties are removed and a channel opened for a regular and uninterrupted progress.

### *Dacoity.*

The term dacoit in its common acceptation is too generously applied to robbers of every denomination, but properly belongs only to robbers on the highway, and especially to such as make it their profession, of which there are many in the woody parts of the district of Dacca, and in the frontiers of the province; a race of outlaws who live from father to son in a state of warfare against society, plundering and burning villages and murdering the inhabitants. These were intended by the Board in the 35th article of their Regulations, which declared that all such offenders shall suffer death, and their Families be condemned to perpetual slavery.

Severe and unjust as this ordinance may seem I am convinced that nothing less than the terror of such a punishment will be sufficient to prevail against an evil which has obtained the sanction and force of hereditary practice, under the almost avowed protection both of the Zemindars of the Country and the first officers of the Government. Yet if a careful distinction be not made, the ryot who, impelled by strong necessity in a single instance, invades the property of his neighbour, will with his family fall a sacrifice to this law and be blended in one common fate with the professed Dacoit or murderer. In the Foujdari trials nothing appears but the circumstances of the robbery for which the prisoner is arraigned. That he is

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

a Dacoit is taken upon presumption and all the world are his enemies.

The Moulavies in the Provincial Courts refuse to pass sentence of death on Dacoits unless the robbery committed by them has been attended with murder. They rest their opinion on the express laws of the Coran, which is the infallible guide of their decisions. The Court of Nizamut under whose review the trials pass, and whose province it is to prepare the Fettwas for the final Sentence and Warrant of the Nizam, being equally bound to follow the Mohametan Law, confirm the Judgement of the Provincial Court. The Mohametan Law is founded on the most lenient principle and an abhorrence of bloodshed. This often obliges the Sovereign to interpose to prevent the guilty from escaping with impunity and to strike at the root of such disorders as the law will not reach. I mean only . . . to show that it is equally necessary and conformable to custom for the Sovereign power to depart in extraordinary cases from the strict letter of the law, and to recommend the same practice in the cases now before us.

I offer it therefore as my opinion that the punishment decreed by this Government against professed and notorious robbers be literally enforced, and where they differ from the sentences of the Adaulut, that they be superadded to them by an immediate act of Government. That every convicted felon and murderer not condemned to death by the sentence of the Adaulut and every criminal who has already been sentenced to work during life on the roads, or to suffer perpetual imprisonment, be sold for slaves or transported as such to the Company's establishment at Ft. Marlborough, and that this Regulation be carried into execution by the immediate orders of the Board or by an officer instituted for that purpose in virtue of a General Order or Commission from the Nazim.

By this means the Government will be released from a heavy expense in erecting prisons, keeping guards in monthly pay, and in the maintenance of accumulating crowds of prisoners. The sale of the Convicts will raise a considerable fund if these disorders continue, and if not the effect will be still more beneficial. The community will suffer no loss by the want of such troublesome members, and the punishment will operate as an example more forcible and useful than imprisonment, fines or mutilation; the former to a people addicted to their ease and who see in such a (penalty) only an exemption from the necessity of daily labor, loses much of its terror, fines fall with unequal weight on the wealthy and indigent: they are unfelt by the first, they prove equivalent to utter ruin and perpetual

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

imprisonment to the last, and mutilation, which is too common a sentence of the Mohametan Courts, though it may deter others, yet renders the criminal a burden to the public, and imposes on him the necessity of persevering in the crimes which it was meant to repress.

I beg leave to subjoin the following Queres for your determination as they have occurred to me in the proceedings of the Adaulut already referred to. I have annexed my opinion to each.

I. [Whether the Government shall intervene as above ?]

N.B.—Although we propose to leave the Nazim the final judge in all Criminal Cases, and the Officers of his Court to proceed according to their own laws, forms and opinions, independent of the controul of this Government, yet many cases may happen in which an invariable observance of this rule may prove of dangerous consequence to the power by which the Government of this Country is held, and to the peace and security of the inhabitants. Wherever such cases happen the remedy can only be obtained from those in whom the sovereign power exists. It is on these that the inhabitants depend for their protection and for the redress of all their grievances, and they have a right to the accomplishment of their expectation of which no treaties nor casuistical distinctions can deprive them. If therefore the powers of the Nizamut cannot answer these salutary purposes or by an abuse of them, which is too much to be apprehended from the present reduced state of the Nizam, and the little interest he has in the general welfare of the Country, shall become hurtful to it, I conceive it to be strictly conformable to Justice and Reason to interpose the authority or influence of the Company, who as Dewan have an interest in the welfare of the country and as the governing power have equally a right and obligation to maintain it.

I am therefore of opinion that wherever it shall be found necessary to supersede the authority of the Nizam to supply the deficiencies or to correct the irregularities of his Courts, it is the duty of this Government to apply such means as in their judgement shall best promote the due course and ends of Justice, but that this license ought never to be used without an absolute necessity, and after the most solemn deliberation.

In many cases it may not be difficult to obtain the Nabob's warrant for such deviations from the ordinary practice as may be requisite, and it were to be wished that they could always be enforced by his authority, but I see so many ill consequences to which this would be liable both from his assent and from his refusal that I am rather inclined to propose that every act of this kind be superadded to his sentence by our own Government.

Although this is my opinion upon the question as it respects the rights of Justice and the good of the people, I am sorry to add that every argument of personal consideration strongly opposes it, having but too much reason to apprehend that while the popular current prevails which overruns every sentiment of candor towards the Company and its agents, it will be dangerous both to our character and fortunes to move a step beyond the plain and

NATIONAL ARCHIVES INDIA

beaten line, and that laudable as our intentions were, we have already done too much. My duty compels me to offer the advice which I have given and to that I postpone every other consideration.

II. [Whether the instrument used, if not one 'formed for shedding blood', should disculpate the murderer, as in Mohametan Law?]

N.B.—If the intention of murder be clearly proved, no distinction should be made with respect to the weapon by which the crime was perpetrated. The murderer should suffer death and the fine be remitted. I am justified in this opinion by good authority even among the Mussulman, although their practice is against it. For a proof of the inequality and injustice of the decisions founded on this strange distinction, I beg leave to quote an instance. A man held the head of a child under water till it was suffocated and made a prize of her clothes and the little ornaments of silver which she wore; it was evident that his object was robbery and murder the means both of perpetrating and concealing it. There is too much cause also to suspect the extraordinary manner in which the murder was committed was suggested by the distinction made by the law in question, by which he was liable to no severe(r) retribution than for simple robbery, whereas he would have been sentenced to suffer death had he killed the deceased with a knife or sword, although he might have been impelled to it by sudden passion and not premeditated design. Yet for this horrid and deliberate act he is pronounced guilty of manslaughter only and condemned to pay the price of blood which seems invariably fixed at the sum of 3,333″ 5″ 4.

III. [Concerning Dacoity. A special office recommended to deal with it.]

IV. Whether the privilege granted by the Mohametan law to sons or next of kin to pardon the murderer of their parents or kinsmen shall be allowed to continue in practice?

N.B.—This law, though enacted by the highest authority which the professors of the Mohametan Faith can acknowledge, appears to be of barbarous construction and contrary to the first principle of Civil society, by which the State acquires an interest in every member who composes it and a right in his security. It is a law which if rigidly observed would put the life of every parent in the hands of his son, and by its effects on weak and timid minds, which is the general character of the natives of Bengal, would afford a kind of pre-assurance of impunity to those who were disposed to become obnoxious to it.

V. Whether the law which enjoins children or nearest of kin to the person deceased to execute the sentence passed on the murderers . . . shall be permitted to continue?

N.B.—This law, though supposed to be of the same divine origin, is yet more barbarous than the former and in its consequences more impotent. It would be difficult to put a case in which the absurdity of it should be more strongly illustrated than in one

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

now before us, of a Mother condemned to perish by the hands of her own children for the murder of her husband. Their age is not recorded, but by the circumstances which appear in the Proceedings they appear to be very young. They have pardoned their Mother. They would have deserved death themselves if they had been so utterly devoid of every feeling of humanity, as to have been able to administer it to her who gave them Life. I am of opinion that the Courts of Justice should be interdicted from passing so horrid a sentence by an Edict of the Nazim, if he will be persuaded to it, by the Government if he refuses.

VI. Whether Fines inflicted for manslaughter shall be proportioned to the nature of the crime, as the Mohametan Law seems to intend, or both to the nature and degree of the crime and to the substance and means of the criminal?

N.B.—Both. If the fine exceeds the means of the criminal, it must deprive the State of his services and prove a heavier punishment than the law has decreed him.

VII. Whether the Fines shall be paid to the Nazim, or be taken by the Company as Dewans, or whether they shall not be set apart as a fund for the maintenance of the Courts and Officers of Justice, and for the restitution of the losses sustained by the inhabitants from Dacoits or thieves?

N.B.—It may be dangerous to admit of such a right in the Nazim. It cannot be better or more equitably employed than for the uses expressed in the concluding terms of the question.

Although it was incumbent on me to deliver my own opinion upon the above references, while I requested that of the Board, I have offered it with diffidence, and I confess with some reluctance, knowing the objections to which every kind of innovation is liable, but more especially in the established laws, or forms of Justice. But I conceive that the points which I have offered to your consideration will be found in reality not so much to regard the laws in being as the want of them, a law which defeats its own ends and operations being scarce better than none.

[Messrs. Lambert and G. Vansittart, consulted, concur.]

*Letter of Hastings to Middleton, Resident at Murshidabad, enclosing Nizamut records.*

*Bengal Revenue Consultations*, 4, Range 49, vol. 41, p. 2786.

SIR,

I must beg your leave to trouble you with a list of the trials for crimes at Moorshedabad and Kishen nagur which have been submitted to the review of the Officers of the Nizamut Adaulut, and I have subjoined to each sentence the

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

opinion I have formed upon reviewing the trials. I wish you would read over the trials and if you agree with me recommend this point to the Begum. I have as much of the milk of human kindness as she can have though a woman, and follow that natural incentive, as well as the dictates of Reason, when I rather choose to put a murderer to death than let him live to perpetrate more murders. In the remarks upon the trials you will observe I have proposed the acquittal of two persons adjudged to pay the price of blood, viz. Cawn Mahomed for striking his slave by which she died and Jacoob for killing a man whom he found in his apartment at an unreasonable hour and struck on the immediate alarm which he received from such an appearance on waking from sleep . . . both appeared to be perfectly innocent.

On perusing the trials I am struck with surprise to observe, that almost every malefactor confesses himself guilty of the crime for which he is tried, although he thereby subjects himself to the loss of life. As this is a circumstance so extraordinary in itself, and so very repugnant to the principle of self-interest by which mankind in general are actuated, I cannot help mentioning it in hopes of obtaining from you some account of the manner in which this confession is procured, whether it is not made till after conviction, whether extorted, or whether won by fair promises of forgiveness.

I am &c.,

WARREN HASTINGS.

Ft. William.
May 24, 1773.

## No. 5. *Inferior Courts.*

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xii, p. 387; Revenue Department.

March 15, 1774.

Para. 16. In our former advices we acquainted you with the measures we had taken for the constitution of a more regular administration of justice in the province of Bengal, by the establishment of courts in every district with an appeal from their decisions to the President and Council. These several Courts have been in general conducted with regularity and attention. They are no doubt liable to those imperfections which attend every new institution, and whatever progress may have been made towards the introduction of that uniform and equal administration of justice which we have attempted to establish we are sensible that much yet remains to be done.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Para. 17. The regulations we have made are few and intended chiefly to give method to the procedure of the different Courts; to abolish the jurisdiction formerly assumed by individuals, and to secure to the inhabitants a more ready access to redress.

Para. 18. In order to convey to you an idea of the manner in which the abstracts of the proceedings of the inferior Courts are kept we have now the honor to forward in the bookpacket those for the Court established in Calcutta as it is by far the most important. We have every reason to believe that it has been conducted with strict integrity and with a regularity and despatch which do credit to Mr. Rous who presides in it.

Para. 19. We have also the pleasure to lay before you the proceedings of the Court established at Calcutta for appeals from the provincial judicatories and held by 3 members of the Council. In this department also we think it incumbent upon us to take notice of the regularity and application of Mr. Bogle, the Clerk of that Court, whom the President represents as equally useful and indefatigable in the records and proceedings of the Nizamut Adaulut committed to his Charge.

Para. 20. Although the execution of the Penal Laws in this country is professedly the province of the Nabob, and we therefore wished as much as possible to avoid any apparent interposition on this subject, yet the importance of a steady and vigorous execution of justice, to the peace and security of the people, and the consideration of the youth and inexperience of the Nabob which exposed him to an improper influence from the officers of his Court has rendered it necessary that we should superintend this department of Government. According to the institution of the Courts for the trial of criminals their proceedings are transmitted and pass under the revisal of the Supreme Court in Calcutta, to which it belongs to pass sentences in all capital cases, which is afterwards laid before the Nabob for his warrant of execution. This process from the negligence or artifice of the servants of the Nabob gave occasion to so many delays, that the prisons were filled with criminals and the suspension of justice gave encouragement to crimes, at the same time that it was impossible with the utmost vigilance to trace every obstacle to its source, or to remove it by repeated applications to the Nabob and Begum. . . . To remedy these evils, no expedient appeared so effectual as that recommended by the President for the appointment of a Deputy on the part of the Nabob who should reside in Calcutta, in order to sign and expedite warrants in his name, and Sudder ul Hue Cawn, the President of the Supreme Mohametan

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Court, has been invested on the President's recommendation with the necessary powers from the Nabob for this purpose. This appointment together with the attention of the President to whose charge the control and revision of this Department has been solely entrusted, is likely to procure the prompt and vigorous execution of Justice.

[Signed by] WARREN HASTINGS
W. ALDERSEY
P. M. DACRES
J. LAWRELL
H. GOODWIN
J. GRAHAM
G. VANSITTART

[The first three constitute the Select Committee.]

## No. 6. *Hastings's views on Native Law.*

[A private letter to the Directors.]

*Bengal Letters*, vol. xii, p. 407.

March 24, 1774.

You have been informed by the public Letter from the Revenue Department of the progress which has been made by the Pundits or Brahmins whom the Board had employed in compiling from the books of their law a code which might serve as a guide to our Dewanni Courts and we transmitted to you in the Packet from that office as a specimen of the projected work an English Translation of the first chapter. I am indebted to the ability and industry of the translator for the means of furnishing you with a second chapter which I am desirous of transmitting to you, as it comprehends the most important subject of their laws, the distribution of property by inheritance. From the labors of a people however intelligent whose studies have been confined to the narrow circle of their own religion, and the decrees founded upon its superstitions and whose discussions in the search of Truth have wanted that lively aid which it can only derive from a free exertion of the understanding and an opposition of opinions, a perfect system of jurisprudence is not to be expected. Yet if it shall be found to contain nothing hurtful to the authority of Government or to the interests of Society and is consonant to the ideas, manners and inclinations of the people for whose use it is intended, I presume that on these grounds it will be preferable



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

to any which even a superior wisdom could substitute in its room. It is from this conviction and from an apprehension of the effects which a contrary opinion might produce, that I have been so earnest in transmitting these sheets for your information, as they will afford at least a proof that the people of this country do not require our aid to furnish them with a rule for their conduct, or a standard for their property.

I have ventured to say thus much on a subject that may possibly appear to have been irregularly obtruded upon your notice, because reports have a long time prevailed, and been communicated to us by the best of private authority, of an intention to frame new courts, and forms of Judicature, for the inhabitants of these provinces. Whatever foundation these reports may have in truth, or whatever may be the extent or principles of the jurisdiction herein supposed, I cannot but express my hope, that nothing of this kind may be finally concluded without an opportunity being given to the members of your Administration to communicate such ideas as their experience may suggest to them ; and this I conceive to be my duty from the consideration of the hurtful effects which an unadvised system might possibly produce to the quiet of the people and the security of your revenue.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

# INDEX AND GLOSSARY


ABUSES: 14 police authority of Zemindar liable to, 21 system of advances open to, 37 abuses of absentee councillors, 41 of inland trade, 49 of dustuk, 117 reform of abuses proposed, 135 abuses censured, 142–3 growth of abuses, Directors' summary of, 227 abuses reformed, 239, 298 abuse of power by Kanungoes.

ABWAB, extra charges levied by revenue officers: 8, 13, 16, 159 Abwab faujdari.

ACCOUNTANT-GENERAL OF THE DIWANI: 296 Croftes (q. v.) appointed.

ADALUT, ADAULUT, ADAWLUT, court of justice; SADR ADALUT, court of appeal; DIWANI ADALUT, court of civil law; FAUJDARI ADALUT, court of criminal law and police: 11, 309–14, 324–30.

AFFLECK, captain of the boat *Panther* (*vide* Orme, *Catalogue of MSS.*, S. C. Hill): 137.

AFGHAN, a branch of the Turco-Iranian race: 3, 26, 54, 169.

AGHAN, AUGUN, ninth month of the Hindu year, November–December: 313.

AKBAR, founder of the Mogul Empire, 1556–1605: 9, 10, 20.

AKBARNAGAR, former capital of Bengal.

ALAM: *see* Shah Alam.

ALDERSEY, WILLIAM: arrived at Calcutta in May 1765, import-warehouse-keeper in 1767, Chief at Kasimbazar from 1769 to 1770, fourth in Council, head of the Committee of Commerce, Comptroller of the Investment: 238, 256, 274, 337.

ALEPPO, 224.

ALEXANDER, JAMES: arrived at Calcutta in 1767, chief of the Revenue Board at Murshidabad in 1772: 275.

ALI VARDI KHAN, Nawab of Bengal 1740–56: 22, 25, 85.

ALLAHABAD, ELLIABAD, ILLAHABAD, town and province in Oudh: 53, 55, 61, 116 granted to Oudh, 128, 166, 227 trade route.

AMEDROY, Diwan of Siraj-ud-Daula: 45.

AMERICANS, 316, 322.

AMIL, AUMIL, AMILDAR, a native revenue collector: 11, 71, 76–7, 81, 86–7, 280–1, 287.

AMIN, AUMEEN, agent, native revenue officer: 255, 265, 281, 283, 292, 325.

AMIRABAD: (1) pargana containing the site of Calcutta; the name has disappeared; (2) small district in Dacca: 31 note.

AMULNAMA, lease or agreement made with a farmer of rents: 260.

AMYATT, PETER: arrived at Calcutta in 1743, accountant and second at Fort William in 1762: 97.

ANDERSON, DAVID: arrived in Calcutta 1767, Persian translator to the Resident at Murshidabad 1773: 292.

ARABIA, ARABS, 19, 20.

ARAK, ARRACK, spirit made from cane-molasses or rice.

ARBITRATION: 88 supervisors to recommend, 273 in caste disputes, 314, 315 difficulties of.

ARCOT, Nawab of, Mohamed Ali Khan: 103 Hastings negotiates with, 127.

ARMENIA, ARMENIAN: 22, 23 important traders, 26 general, 31, 33 allies of English, 52 up country, 60 farmer, 82–3 traders.

ARREARS OF RENTS, 138, 262.

ARTILLERY, 34.

'ASIA,' East India Company's ship, 237.

ASIN, ASSIN, the seventh month of the Hindu year, September–October: 313.

ASSAM, district to north-east of Bengal: 2.

ASSAY MASTER, placed under the Committee of Accounts: 133.

ASSESSMENT: 275 difficulty of. *See also* Todar Mal.

AUCTION OF LANDS, 260, 264, 281.




NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

AUDITOR OF REVENUES, office held by members of Council alternating weekly: 205, 295.
AUMEEN: *see* Amin.
AUMIL: *see* Amil.
AURANG, AURUNG, East India Company's factory for purchase on advances of native piece-goods: 36, 39, 76, 156 proposed footing of, 238 correspondence with, 253 remittances to.
AURANGZEB, Mogul emperor, 1658–1707: 10, 30, 40.
AYOUT (cf. *ayati*, *ayoti*, term used in the Deccan for an inspector of weights and measures), 252.

BABER, EDWARD: arrived at Calcutta in 1763, assistant in Secretary's Secret Department in 1765, Sub-Secretary to the Select Committee in 1766, Assistant-Secretary and Postmaster in 1767, Secretary and Deputy-Sheriff in 1768–9, Chief at Midnapur in 1770: 248, 297.
BABOO, a term of respect for a native of distinction.
BAGINISS GUAT (GAUT), 214.
BAHADUR, title affixed commonly to names of European officers.
BAHAR: *see* Bihar.
BAIKANTHPUR: *see* Bycunpore.
BAKHTYAR, Khilji, deputy of Mahomed Ghori: 2.
BAIL, 328.
BAISAKH, BYZACK, Hindu name of a month in spring, April–May: 2.
BAKHSHI, BUXEY, BUCSHBUNDER, paymaster, under the Mogul system often the Commander-in-Chief: 35 note, 133 under Committee of Accounts, 137, 204, 273 officer of Customs at Hugli.
BALAMBANGAN, island in the Pacific, situated fifteen miles north-east of the north point of Borneo (*see* Dalrymple's *Repertory*, ii. 10): 129.
BALASORE, town in Bengal, capital of Orissa, subordinate factory of the East India Company: 2, 23, 30, 36, 93.
BALWANT or BULWANT SING, Raja of Benares 1739–70, father of Chet Sing: 187.
BAMBOO, 308.
BANK, 234, 253.
BANYAN, BANYA, BUNYA, BANIAN, a Hindu trader, shopkeeper, or money-lender; agents to Europeans: 42 Fryer's account of, 52, 90, 148 virtual tyrants of Bengal, 151 farmer's fear of, 229 salt profits of, 259 Hastings's estimate of, 261, 270 not to farm, 274, 306.
BARJA, selling goods by force: 50.
BARKER, SIR ROBERT: arrived in India 1754, served in Carnatic till 1765, arrived in Calcutta May 3, 1765, with rank of Colonel; General C.-in-C. 1770–3, resigned 1775: 123, 153 quarrels with Council, 176–7 insubordination of, 181, 186.
BARWELL, RICHARD: arrived in Calcutta in June 1758, assistant in Accountant's office in 1763, Resident at Malda 1765, Chief at Patna 1771, Chief at Dacca, Collector at Luckipore and Sylhet 1773, member of Council: 125, 176 character and opposition of, 194, 201 obstructs business, 204 appointed to Dacca, 263, 274, 280.
BASSEIN, town near Bombay, once a Portuguese settlement: 128.
BATSON, STANLAKE: arrived at Calcutta in 1746, Chief at Kasimbazar in 1762: 97.
BATTA: (1) difference or rate of exchange; discount on short weight or uncurrent rupee; (2) an extra allowance made to officers for special service: 35, 56, 161, 164.
BAXEE or BAZEE JUMMA (*bazi* = miscellaneous), fines for petty offences: 260–1, 326 Faujdari baxee.
BECHER, RICHARD: arrived at Calcutta in 1743, Chief at Dacca in 1756, import-warehouse-keeper 1757, Resident at Murshidabad 1769: 65, 82, 89, 323.
BEEGAH: *see* Bigha.
BEERBHUM: *see* Birbhum.
BEGUM (*see* Munni Begum), a lady of rank.
BENARES, BANARAS, city and district in Oudh, a religious centre: 12, 23, 54, 170 Hastings's visits, 187, 227 route to Upper India.
BENCOOLEN, or Fort Marlborough (q. v.).
BENGALI, Hindu inhabitants of Bengal: 26 unwarlike, 156 of gentle temper, 285 language, 325 liti-

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

gious, 327 English influence on Bengali character.
BERHAMPUR, BURRAMPORE, town five miles below Murshidabad on Bhagirathi R.: 123.
BETEL-NUT, leaf of *Piper betel*, chewed with dried areca-nut, thence called betel-nut: 19, 50, 58–60, 130 trade to be open, 232, 244 duties on betel-nuts continued, 251, 308.
BHADON, BHADOOM, the fifth month of the Hindu year, August-September: 313.
BHAGALPUR, BOGLEPORE, town on the Ganges in the old district of Monghir; now name of district also: 180, 213.
BHANDARI, BUNDWARRY, a storekeeper, a steward.
BHIRBHUM: *see* Birbhum.
BHONSLA, Maratha Chief of Nagpur; said to be the name of Sivaji's family or caste: 115.
BHUTAN, BOUTAN, a state in the Eastern Himalayas: 178, 180, 213–14 operations against Bhutanese, 216, 303.
BHUYAN, a chief or headman holding by military service.
BIGHA, BEEGAH, a native measure of land varying in different parts of India; in Bengal it is one-third of an acre: 8 note, 48.
BIHAR, BEHAR, BEYHAR, province lying betwen Bengal and Oudh: 2–3 races in, 20 castes in, 23 old city of, 24, 36 factory at, 68, 117 Resident for, 139 under Doolubram, 256, 278–9 leases in, 302 revenues of.
BILLS OF EXCHANGE, 137, 235.
BIRBHUM, BEERBHUM, BHIRBHUM, a district lying due north of Burdwan in Bengal: 180, 202 settlement of, 218, 245 custom-houses in, 256 desolation in, 274.
BISSENPOOR, north-western district of Burdwan (*vide* Rennell's *Bengal Atlas*): 202 settlement of, 245 custom-houses retained in, 274.
BLACK HOLE OF CALCUTTA, 67.
BODDAM, THOMAS: arrived at Calcutta 1743, Writer, tenth in Council, Resident at Bulramgurry in 1757, appointed to Balasore, military storekeeper in 1758: 93.
BOGLE, GEORGE: arrived at Calcutta in 1770, assistant in the Select Committee's office in 1772, Clerk of the Sadr Diwani in 1774: 336.
BOGLEPORE: *see* Bhagalpur.
BOLTS, WILLIAM, 1740?–1808: a Dutch adventurer in the service of the East India Company from 1759 to 1766, deported in 1768, wrote attacks on the Bengal Government: 42, 113, 139.
BOMBAY, Presidency on the west coast of India: 31, 115, 170 financial dependence of Bombay on Bengal, 318.
BOND DEBTS, 219, 224.
BOUGHTON, DR. GABRIEL: surgeon of the East India Company's ship *Hopewell*; employed by Shuja Sultan, who was Governor of Bengal from 1639 to 1660: 30.
BOULTON, Chairman of the Court of Directors in 1773–4: 303.
BOUTAN: *see* Bhutan.
BOWEY, WILLIAM, Deputy Assistant in the East India Company's Marine at Fort William May 31, 1771: 139.
BRAHMANISM, BRAHMINS, the worship and priests of Brahma: 4, 17, 337.
BRIDGEMAN, JAMES, Chief of factory at Hugli in 1651: 30.
BROOKE, ROBERT: Ensign in service of East India Company 1764, Captain 1767, resigned 1775: 180, 213, 217.
BROWNE, JAMES: (probably) Cadet in East India Company's service in 1765, Lieutenant in 1767, Captain in 1771, Major in 1781, Lieut.-Colonel in 1788, died in 1792: 180, 217.
BUCSHBUNDER: *see* Bakhshi.
BUMUTTER (cf. *muththa*), charity lands: 298.
BUNDABUST (BAND-BAR-DASHT), account of share payable by each member of a village community.
BURCARDASSIES, BURGUNDASSES, matchlock-men: 79, 254.
BURDWAN, town and district in Bengal: 14, 64 assigned to the English, 65, 72 Hastings raises arrears from, 84, 87, 89, 136 model state of, 228–9 salt in, 238 price of silk in, 274, 288, 293, 304 Burdwan Division, 307.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

BURKE, EDMUND, 97, 102.
— RICHARD, 112.
BURRAMPORE : *see* Berhampur.
BUSSORAH, port on the Persian Gulf : 19, 224.
BUXAR, town in Shahabad district, Bengal; scene of British defeat of Mir Kasim : 53.
BUXEY : *see* Bakhshi.
BYCUNPORE, BAIKANTHPUR, town in Patna district, a holy place thronged by pilgrims at the festival of Sivaratri (*vidè* Thornton's *Gazetteer*) : 27.
BYZACK : *see* Baisakh.

CADETS, 33 corps of, 272 superfluity of, 322.
CALCUTTA, 1, 30–1 purchase of, 32–4, troops at, 37–48 council, 117 council moved to, 150, 177 jurisdiction in, 234 mint at, 243 trade of, 290 revenue council, 291, 304 committee of revenue, 327 Zemindars' cutcheri abolished.
CALCUTTA COMMITTEE OF REVENUE, established April 1, 1771 : 293.
CALSA : *see* Khalsa.
CAMAC, CAPTAIN JACOB : Lieutenant in East India Company's service Oct. 14, 1763; resigned Dec. 2, 1782 : 214, 218.
CANONGO : *see* Kanungo.
CAPE OF GOOD HOPE, 40.
CAPITAL OF BENGAL : 23 native, 150 Calcutta, position of.
CARCOON : *see* Karkun.
CARNATIC, east coast of Indian peninsula : 20, 110 power of Nawab of Arcot in.
CARTIER, JOHN : arrived at Calcutta in 1750, Chief at Dacca in 1762, President 1770–2 April 13 : 114 note, character of, 120 fate of, 139–45 administration of, censured, 148 note in margin, 174 Cartier's finance, 175 his disputes with Council, 176 his appeal against General Barker, 223, 293, 314.
CARTWRIGHT, RALPH : a merchant trading for the East India Company in Bengal in 1733, opened first factory : 30, 320.
CASHMERE, KASHMIR, native state lying to the north of the Punjab : 4.
CASTE, distinctions of birth, tribe, or occupation which separate Hindus : 2, 9, 20, 272–3, 324–5.
CAUBUL : *see* Kabul.
CAUZEE : *see* Kasi.
CENTINELS : *see* Sentinels.
CAWN, (1) name of a month, 252 (2) *see* Khan.
— MAHOMED, 335.
CERTIFICATE OF COMPENSATION, 134, 239.
CHAIT SINGH : *see* Chet Sing.
CHAKERAN, CHAUKERAUN ZEMEEN, police lands : 209, 211, 275.
CHALAN, CHELAN, an invoice, voucher, or pass.
CHAMPION, ALEXANDER : Captain September 1, 1758, Major 1763, Lieut.-Col. 1766, Colonel 1770, Commander-in-Chief January 18, 1774, resigned December 29, 1774 : 184–5.
CHARNOCK, JOB : founder of Calcutta in 1690 : 23, 31, 290, 320.
CHARTERS, 33, 40, 52.
CHARTRES or CHARTERS, SAMUEL : arrived at Calcutta in 1769, collector at Jessore 1773, Buxey to the Board of Trade in 1775 : 292.
CHAPLAINS, 34.
CHASA, CHASSAR, a ploughman or cultivator : 82, 83.
CHATHAM, WILLIAM PITT, EARL OF, 54.
CHAUKI, CHOKEY, or CHOWKY, station of police or customs; CHAUKIDAR, a watchman, police, or customs peon : 16, 41, 50, 64, 78–9, 118, 134 reduction of, 240 abolition of.
CHAUTH, CHOUT : (1) tribute amounting to one-quarter of the regular assessment, levied by Marathas; (2) fees, 4 annas per cent., paid to officers of justice : 115, 159, 276 Maratha chout, 314, 325 chouts in courts.
CHEHELSETOON, the Hall of One Hundred Pillars at Murshidabad : 27.
CHET SING, CHAIT or CHYTE SINGH, Raja of Benares 1770–81 : 13, 187, 227, 279, 323.
CHIEF, head of a factory, man in charge of a district, 35, 37, &c.; Chiefs of Divisions created in 1774, 232.
CHIEF JUSTICE, 318.
CHINA, 37, 179.
CHINSURAH, Dutch settlement in Hugli district : 46.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

CHITTAGONG, district in Eastern Bengal: 2, 23, 64, 94–5, 228 salt produced in, 293, 307.
CHOBDAR, CHUBDAR, a servant to announce visitors, 28.
CHOKEY: *see* Chauki.
CHOROMANDEL: *see* Coromandel.
CHOTA NAGPUR, CHUTYA NAGPUR, a group of states in the hilly district to the south-west of Bengal: 2.
CHOUT: *see* Chauth.
CHOWDRY, landholders in next rank to Zemindars: 11, 17.
CHUBDAR: *see* Chobdar.
CHUKLA, CHUCKLA, subdivision of the ancient circar or province in Bengal: 10, 27, 36, 77.
CHUNAM, CHUNA, lime: 76.
CHUNCAPARRA, village near Rampur Boalia: 43.
CHUTTANUTTA, SUTALUTI, a village on the site of North Calcutta: 31 note 2.
CHYTE SINGH: *see* Chet Sing.
CIRCAR: *see* Sirkar.
CIRCUIT, ANNUAL, proposed, 159.
— COMMITTEE OF: *see* Committee.
CIVIL SERVANTS: 33–7, 140 cost of, 180 reform of.
CLAVERING, SIR JOHN, 1722–77: appointed by the Regulating Act to be Commander-in-Chief and second in Council of Bengal with right of succession to the Governor-Generalship, which he claimed in June 1777; died August 30, 1777: 14 note, 42, 265, 266.
CLIVE, ROBERT LORD, 46–7, 51, 53–62, 93–6, 103, 112 Clive's jagir, 114 note, 115–16, 119, 121, 153, 167 cedes Allahabad, 169 policy discarded, 175–6 relations with Council, 180, 182 letter to, 227, 322.
COFFEE-HOUSES, 112.
COINAGE (*see also* Currency), 129, 135, 164 copper, 233.
COLEBROOKE, SIR GEORGE, Chairman of the Court of Directors in 1769, Banker and M.P. for Arundel: 103, 148, 268, 317.
— HENRY THOMAS, 1765–1837: Assistant Collector at Tirhut, 1786: 148, 206.
COLLECTIONS: *see* Revenue.
COLLECTORS, English or native officials supervising or collecting the revenues of Bengal: 62, 67, 71, 159 number to be reduced, 236 conflict with traders, 253–4 remittances, 257 just discernment of, 258 Hastings's account of, 269, 291–2 in districts, 316 excessive powers of, 322, 325.
COLLET, MATTHEW: arrived at Calcutta in 1740, writer, seventh in Council, naval storekeeper 1757, Zemindar in 1758: 93.
COMIOPLIES, inferior agents employed in the cotton trade at Madras: 108.
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: 153–4 relations with Council, 176 relations with civil authority, 206–7.
COMMISSION OF THREE SUPERVISORS: 112, 113, 114, 116, 118, 126–33, 135.
COMMITTEE:
— OF ACCOUNTS, 133, 203 'a Committee which never met'.
— OF CIRCUIT, 125 creation of, 153 functions of, 181, 195, 212 in Kuch Behar, 226, 256–86 work of, 326.
— OF INSPECTION, 56, 180, 203–6.
— MILITARY, 133.
— OF TRADE or Commerce, Society of Trade, created in 1765 as an exclusive Company: 58, 80, 133, 141 accounts of demanded, 202, 205 balances paid up by, 228 salt monopoly of, 230.
— OF REVENUE: *see* Revenue.
— SELECT: *see* Select.
COMPTROLLER OF THE INVESTMENT, 219, 223, 231, 238.
CONVICTS, 331.
COOCH BEHAR, COSE BAHAR, COSE BEYHAR, KUCH BEHAR, a state to the north of Rungpore in Bengal: 180, 212–13, 227, 302 revenues of, 308.
COOT, an estimate or register of salt (cf. Telegu *kotharu* = a salt-pan, salt-works; also *kote bitti* = a tax once levied in Mysore): 252.
COOTE, SIR EYRE, K.B.: arrived in India 1754, Captain in 1755, Colonel 1765, M.P. 1768, Commander-in-Chief 1779–83, died 1783: 69, 102.
COOTWAL: *see* Kotwal.
COPRA, dried kernel of coco-nut used for oil.
CORAH: *see* Kora.
CORNWALLIS, MARQUESS OF: Governor-General 1786–93, introduced

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

permanent settlement of land revenue in Bengal: 266, 321.
COROMANDEL, CHOROMANDEL, east coast of Madras Presidency: 143.
Coss: *see* Kos.
COSSID, a messenger.
COSSIM ALLY CAWN: *see* Kasim Ali Khan.
COSSIMBAZAR, KASIMBAZAR, commercial suburb of Murshidabad, factory and fort of East India Company: 23, 30, 35 note, 36, 41–6, 93, 101, 132, 172.
COTTON, 3, 20, 81, 107–10.
COUNCIL, THE SUPREME, CALCUTTA: the highest British governing body in Bengal, consisting of the President and a number of members varying from 16 before 1772 to 4 after 1774: 32–3, 37, 43–4, 66–7, 76, 117 reform of, 120 weakness of, 123 and note numbers of, 130 confined to Calcutta, 131 duties of, 133 numbers of Committee fixed, 152 harmony of, 153, 154, 155 to remain at Calcutta, 156 to control cutcheri, 158, 159 to go on circuit, 172 quarrels, 199 procedure in, 281 favouritism of, 318 Governor-General in.
COUNTRY GOVERNMENT, native authority in Bengal: 52, 75, 78, 167.
COUNTRY POWERS, native States of India: 115, 127–8 Bengal to keep peace with, 130, 133 correspondence with, 168.
COURT OF DIRECTORS OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY, the governing body in London: 33.
— OF SESSIONS IN CALCUTTA, 281.
COURT MARTIAL, 123, 271.
COVENANTS, 57, 58–9 covenanted servants, 60, 74–5, 135.
CRIME: 27, 128 jurisdiction for, 311 different standards of, 313, 324, 329, 330–5 criminal jurisdiction reformed.
CROFTES, CHARLES: arrived at Calcutta 1769, Accountant to the Revenue Board at Murshidabad 1772: 292, 296.
CRORE, KROR, 10 millions or 100 lacs of rupees: 86.
CURRENCY (*see also* Coinage), 129, 135, 161, 219, 233–5, 253–4.
CUSTOMS: 219 reform of, 225, 240–52, 293. *See also* Chauki.
CUSTOMS MASTER, 15, 76, 133, 293.
CUTCHERI, CUTCHERRY, CUCHERREE, KACHAHRI: a court, an office, the place where any public business is transacted, the country magistrate's court: 11, 16, 88, 128, 153, 156 to be centre for collections, 269 of Zemindar, 270, 272 Sadr cutcherry, 284, 311, 313.
CUTTACK, capital of Orissa: 23, 30.

DACCA or JEHANGIRNAGAR, city and district in Eastern Bengal, subordinate factory, centre of important trade: 14, 20, 23, 36, 93, 134 under Mohamed Reza Khan, 164 mint at, 194 revenues of, 226 custom-house at, 228–9, 235, 245, 275, 304 Dacca Division, 307, 330.
DACOIT, one of a gang of robbers: 14, 64, 178–9, 254, 326, 330–2.
DACRES, PHILIP MILNER: arrived in Calcutta in 1756, sub-accountant in 1762: 256, 274, 337.
DADNI, DADNEY, an advance, agent entrusted with advances: 37–9, 150, 219–22, 236–7.
DAK, DAUK, DAWK, a post office, postal service.
DALAI LLAMA, religious ruler of Thibet: 227.
DAROGO, DROGAH, chief in any Government department, head of police, customs, or excise: 11, 18, 78, 309, 330.
DASTAK: *see* Dustuk.
DAWSON, ADAM: arrived at Calcutta in 1726, Assistant at Dacca in 1745–6, export-warehousekeeper 1748, President 1749–50: 34.
DEAN, RICHARD, Deputy Master in East India Company's Marine at Calcutta, May 31, 1771: 139.
DEBTS: 140 of junior servants, 161 of Zemindars, 271, 312 Court for, 324, 325.
DECCAN, DEKKAN, central tableland of Southern India: 128.
DECULCUTTA (*see* Calcutta), 31 note 2.
DELHI, DEHLY, city and district in Punjab, ancient capital of Mogul Empire, new capital of British India: 25, 54, 116, 167.
DELOLL, a broker: 21, 38, 220.
DEMUTTER (cf. *di*, *dihi* = a district composed of a few villages, and *muhtha* = subdivision of a dis-

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

trict in Northern Sirkars, a large estate), charity lands: 298.
DEREENCK, extra tax: 261.
DIET MONEY, 35.
DINAJPUR, DINAGEPORE, town and district in Eastern Bengal and Assam: 52, 304, 307.
DIRECTORS (*see also* Court of Directors), 1, 35, 41, 48, 53–4, 57–60, 62, 65, 95, 103, 113, 123, 166.
DISCIPLINE: 154 military, 177 need of, 180 of sepoys.
DISPATCHES, list of, from Director to President, 126.
DIVIDEND: on East India Company stock, 102–3, 113, 318.
DIVISIONS, the six divisions of Bengal: 304.
DIWAN, DEWAN, DUAN, a royal court, a tribunal, a chief officer of state, the head financial minister: 9, 10, 11, 14, 16, 18, 27, 31, 32, 66 starting forth as, 67, &c., 269 to replace Zemindar, 291.
— KHANEH, hall of audience at Murshidabad: 27.
— NAIB, 291.
DIWANI, office of diwan: 48 first offered to British, 54–6 granted to British, 58, 60–3, 67, 85–6 effect of, 118 actual assumption of, 135, 136 'to stand forth as Diwan', 153 result of, 166–7 implications of, 169 Hastings's use of, 171 responsibility for, 220 lowers importance of trade, 219, 313 Sadr Diwani, 325 Diwani Adalut.
DOAB, land between two rivers, Ganges and Jumna: 115.
DOLCHUND, RAJA, head of the first bank of Calcutta: 235.
DONGA, a canoe made of plantain leaves: 246.
DOOLY, DULI, a litter, a swing cot: 247.
DOOLUBRAM, RAJA, 139.
DOW, CAPTAIN ALEXANDER: Cadet 1760 in Bengal Infantry, Captain in 1764, historian, wrote account of India in 1770, died 1779: 4, 113, 224.
DRAKE, ROGER (junior): arrived at Calcutta in 1737, fifth at Kasimbazar in 1742, Governor of Calcutta from 1752 to 1758: 45.
DRAVIDIAN RACE, probably original type of population of India: 2, 3.
DUAL SYSTEM, form of government set up in Bengal by Clive in 1765 by which the Nawab retained a merely nominal authority: 52, 60, 62–3, 65, 67, 93, 119, 126, 169, 217, 219.
DUBASH, DUBASHI, DOBASHI, interpreter, servant to a mercantile house: 109.
DUCARELL, GERARD GUSTAVUS: arrived at Calcutta in 1765, supervisor of Purnea in 1769: 89, 90, 91.
DUELLING, 177.
DUFTUR, DEFTUR, a record, register, office of revenue: 298.
DUNBAR, LIEUTENANT JAMES, 177.
DUPRÉ, JOSIAS: arrived at Madras in 1752 as factor, tenth of Council in 1762, import-warehousekeeper and assay-master, President 1770–2: 103–4, 120, 258, 318.
DURBAR, DARBAR, levée or court: 27, 44, 76–7, 88, 93, 131.
DURREEP DEO, Zemindar of Bycunpore: 216.
DUSMUSSA RUPEES, current at Murshidabad and Dacca: 164.
DUSTUK, DUSTUCK, DASTAK, DYSTICK, a pass or permit: 39–42, 48–52, 59, 134, 164 abolition of, 219, 225–6, 238–9.
DUTCH, 20, 44–5, 80, 163, 253.
DUTY: 16 road-tolls, 51 evasion of, 59 high rates of, 78, 80–5, 88, 98–100, 117, 130, 150, 162–4, 226 uniform rate fixed at 2½ per cent., 228–30 salt duty, 240, 242, 244.
DYSTICK: *see* Dustuk.

EAST INDIA COMPANY: 1, 5, 23, 31 position under Moguls, 32 Company's government in Bengal, 35, 48 confirmation of rights of, 49–67 supremacy of, 95 acquires Burdwan, 113 incurs intervention of Government, 166 Company's position in 1772, 320.
EAST INDIA COMPANY'S STOCK, 103, 106, 112–13.
EDWARDS, CAPTAIN: in command of a Pargana battalion, killed by Sunnyasis: 180.
EGYPT, 19, 224.
ELLIS, WILLIAM: arrived in India in 1749, Chief at Kasimbazar in 1759, Chief at Patna in 1762, murdered by Kasim Ali in 1763: 69, 97–100.
ELY RUPEES, current at Patna: 164.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES INDIA

EMPEROR: *see* Mogul.
EUROPEANS: 11, 19, 23, 33–5, 37, 41, 44, 48, 50, 52, 54–5, 62 'foreign nations', 81, 86, 124, 157 restrained to coast, 158 arrest natives, 162–3, 177 subject to Mayor's Court, 190 companies, 242, 247, 261 not to farm, 281 permitted to farm, 306 officers, 327 under British law.
EVANS, RICHARD: Senior Lieutenant, commissioned August 27, 1762, killed by mutineer 1772: 213.
EXCLUSIVE COMPANY, 58–9.

FAQUIR, FAKIR, a poor person, usually a religious mendicant: 179.
FAMINE of 1770: 4, 67, 91–2 reports of, 119, 135, 192 Mohamed Reza Khan's conduct regarding, 256 effects of, 297.
FANAM, gold or silver coin, the latter worth 3*d*.
FARM, annual sum paid by rent-collectors: 15.
FARMER, a publican, one who collects the taxes from a given district: 15, 17, 50, 87, 90, 148, 151, 209, 249, 303, 325.
FARRUKHSIYAR, FURRUCK SHAH, Mogul Emperor 1712–19: 23, 40.
FATWA, FETTWA, a judicial sentence in the Mahomedan court: 331.
FAUJDAR, FOUZDAR, PHOUSDAR, officer of police, magistrate or judge in criminal cases: 11, 13–15, 21, 56, 63, 79, 89, 117, 159, 178, 209, 210, 284 jurisdiction inherent in Zemindar, 297, 306 forbidden to farm, 308, 310 Faujdar's position discussed, 312 Sadr Faujdar and Faujdari Adalut. (*See also* Adalut *and* Sadr.)
FAUNDEES, small custom-houses at which road duties on commodities were levied: 244.
FETTWA: *see* Fatwa.
FINES: 24, 88, 211, 272 applicable to high castes, 313, 325, 331 inequality of, 334.
FLOYER, CHARLES, writer, fifth in Council at Calcutta 1771: 293.
FORBES, THOMAS: arrived at Calcutta in 1759, third at Kasimbazar in 1767: 139.
FORDE, FRANCIS: Lieutenant-Colonel in H.M. 39th Regiment, known as Adlercron's, the first regulars in India; succeeded to Killpatrick's command in 1758; one of the Commission of Supervisors lost at sea 1769: 113.
FOREIGN RELATIONS OF BENGAL, 115, 122, 127–8, 130, 133, 168, 188, 242–3.
FORTUNES MADE IN INDIA, 101 by Warren Hastings, 102, 109, 262 hard to gain.
FORT MARLBOROUGH, at Bencoolen in Sumatra, founded in 1686, exchanged with the Dutch for Malacca on March 11, 1824: 331.
FORT ST. GEORGE, at Madras: 139.
FORT WILLIAM, at Calcutta: 139.
FRANCIS, PHILIP, 1740–1818: amanuensis to Pitt in 1761, clerk at the War Office from 1762 to 1772, member of Council of Bengal under the Regulating Act 1774–80: 12, 14 note, 176, 228, 262, 263, 286.
FRANK, a free pass: 39, 40, 49.
FREE MERCHANTS, persons licensed by the East India Company to trade on their own account within their territories, not covenanted servants, forbidden to engage in trade with Europe: 51, 58, 135, 289.
FRENCH IN INDIA, 48, 80, 93, 135, 142, 328.
FULTA, FALTA, a village within the Twenty-four Parganas, on the east bank of the Hugli River; in 1756 a Dutch station, to which the English retreated from Calcutta: 45.
FURRUCK SHAH: *see* Farrukhsiyar.

GANGES, sacred river of Northern India: 169 natural frontier, 181.
GAUR, former capital of Bengal (*vide* Buchanan-Hamilton's *Drawings*, vol. iii, No. 2): 23.
GENTU, GENTOO: (1) a Gentile, a Hindu, non-Mahomedan races; (2) the Bengali language: 3, 179, 273, 285.
GEORGIA, 224.
GHAT, GHAUT, GAUT, HAUT, JAUT, a landing-place, ferry, or pass: 16, 241, 298.
GHAZIPUR, town and district in Benares Division: 53, 54.
GHI, GHEE, clarified butter: 308.
GHOLAM HOUSSEIN KHAN, 22.
GOBINDPUR: *see* Govindpur.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

GODDARD, THOMAS: Captain, October 24, 1763, Colonel 1779, General; removed from Bengal to Bombay Establishment 1781: 223.
GOLAH, GOLAHJAUT, a storehouse for grain or salt, circular with conical roof: 252.
GOMASTAH, a native agent: 21, 36–9, 52, 76, 80, 107 gomastahs established in Madras, 158 under civil magistrate, 219–22.
GOMBROON, port near Ormuz on Persian Gulf: 19.
GOODWIN, HENRY: arrived in Calcutta 1758, writer and merchant 1771, twelfth in Council 1772, member of Revenue Board 1772–6, Comptroller 1774, member of Board of Trade and Chief at Chittagong 1775: 274, 337.
GOORDASS, RAJA, son of Nuncomar: 172, 192.
GORING, CHARLES, a senior servant at Kasimbazar in 1766: 42, 292.
GOVERNOR: *see* President.
— GENERAL: 104, 306, 318.
GOVINDPUR, GOBINDPUR, native town acquired by East India Company, site chosen for Fort William at Calcutta: 31 note 3.
GRAHAM, JOHN: arrived in Calcutta in 1759, Resident at Burdwan 1762, Supervisor 1769: 89, 90, 256, 274, 337.
GRAIN: 80, 193, 195 monopoly, 202, 241, 259, 301 stored, 308.
GRANT, JOHN: Lieutenant 1764, Captain 1766, resigned 1775: 147, 292.
GRAY, GEORGE: arrived at Calcutta 1755, Resident at Malda 1762: 58, 71.
GREGORY, ROBERT (senior): arrived at Calcutta in 1772, assistant at Lucknow 1783: 195.
GREGORY or GOORGEEN KHAN, Armenian: 26.
GROSE, JOHN: arrived at Calcutta in 1763, clerk to Zemindar 1766, Supervisor of Rungpore in 1770: 89.
GUCHAVUT, practice of forcing goods on buyers: 50.
GUNGE, a storehouse or market, usually for grain: 16, 76, 241–4, 298.
GUNNEGARRIES, fines (cf. *gunahgavi* = criminality): 272.
GUNNY, sacking: 76.
GURRY, GHARI: twenty-four minutes, used commonly for English hour: 246.
GWALIOR, celebrated fort on an isolated rock in Central India Agency: 115.

HAFIZ RAHMUT CAWN, RAHMAT KHAN, a Rohilla leader ruling Pilibhit, east of Ganges, in 1773: 186.
HALDARRY, tax on marriages: 260.
HALHED, NATHANIEL BRASSEY, 1751–1830: arrived at Calcutta 1772, translated native code: 4 note.
HARE, FRANCIS: arrived at Calcutta 1755, second at Patna 1769: 293.
HARIHARAPUR, early English settlement on the Mahanuddi: 30.
HARISPUR GAR, port at the mouth of the river Patna in Orissa: 30.
HARPER, GABRIEL: Ensign in 1763, Captain in 1766, Colonel 1786, resigned 1788: 123, 139, 177.
HARRIS, JAMES: arrived at Calcutta 1758, tenth in Council 1772: 274.
HARWOOD, WILLIAM: arrived at Calcutta in 1763, Supervisor of Rajmahal in 1770; 89.
HASTINGS, WARREN: 1, 5, 14, 16, 35 salary of, 39, 41–6 as junior servant, 60 note, 66, 67, 93–140, 105 Hastings's task, 114 appointed to Bengal, 143, 145 approval of, 146 plans, 176 character, 177 views on military subordination, 182, 319 estimate of.
HAULBUNGEN, a breaking-in upon the new year's rents, a forestalling of the revenues; farmers forced to pay rents prematurely to Zemindars, without interest.
HAUT: *see* Ghat.
HAWALI, HAVELLY, lands held by a Zemindar for his personal use or profit, the Zemindar's private estate: 12.
HAY, WILLIAM: arrived at Calcutta in 1752, import-warehousekeeper in 1762: 97.
HIDGELY, HIJILI, HEDGELEE, (1) a district in Orissa, the low coast

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

lands on the west of the Hugli; (2) a cultivator of these lands: 251, 274, 307.
HIGGINSON, ALEXANDER: arrived at Calcutta in 1763, Paymaster to a detachment on the Coromandel coast 1769, in receipt of Captain's pay and batta; Collector, Secretary to Revenue Department in 1772: 139.
HIRCARRAH, messenger or spy: 25, 28.
HOARDING, practice of hoarding coin: 161–2, 233.
HOLKAR, family name of ruling chief of Indore in Malwa: 115.
HOLWELL, JOHN, 1711–98: Zemindar of the Twenty-four Parganas, member of Council 1754, survivor from the Black Hole: 41, 102.
HOOLE, JOHN, 1727–1803: clerk in the India House and Auditor of Accounts 1773; author: 296.
HUCKEM BEG, native farmer of the customs at Kasimbazar: 41.
HUGLI, river, town, and district in Bengal, a subordinate factory of the East India Company: 31, 36, 202 settlement of revenues in, 226 custom-house in, 245, 247, 248 under Lushington, 274, 276, 307.
HUSTABOOD, HASTOBUD, a comparative account showing the past and present produce of an estate: 87, 260, 282, 284, 298.
HUZOORIMULL, HAZARI MAL: brother-in-law of Omichand; Calcutta banker: 195, 235.
HYDER ALLY CAWN, HAIDAR ALI KHAN, 1769–82: usurper of the throne of Mysore: 183.

ILLAHABAD: *see* Allahabad.
IMPEY, SIR ELIJAH, 1732–1809: educated at Westminster and Cambridge, Counsel for the East India Company before the House of Commons in 1772, appointed first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court 1773, President of the Sadr Diwani Adalut 1780, recalled 1783, impeachment of, abandoned 1787: 318.
INFLUENCE: 259 results of, 322.
INHERITANCE: 161–2 Government claim to, 264 old system of, 312, 324–5.
INLAND TRADE, traffic in the necessaries of life produced and consumed within Bengal: 19, 41, 50–2, 57–60, 118, 155, 174, 219, 235.
INQUIRY: (1) Court of Directors' inquiry into conduct of their servants: 114 neglected by Cartier, 135, 166, 174, 193 importance of, 117–20, 174, 196–207, 205 Committee of Inquiry created.
— (2) House of Commons inquiry into East Indian affairs, ordered 1766, held 1767–73: 102, 112.
INSPECTION, BOARD OF: *see* Committee.
INSPECTORS OF REVENUE, 291.
INSTRUCTIONS TO COMMISSIONERS, 114–18, 127, 133.
INTEREST NOTES, 223.
INTEREST, RATES OF, 224.
INVESTMENT, the East India Company's import and export trade in Bengal: 37, 39, 42, 50, 82–3, 103 Madras investment, 119 reduced, 124, 142–3 failure of, 156, 163 enhanced cost of, 181, 202, 219–25 reform of, 220 Hastings's plans for, 233 effect of investment on currency, 236–8 reform of, 246 duty on.
ISLAMABAD, Chittagong: 156.

JACHENDAR, JACHANDAR, an appraiser, a valuer: 38.
JAFAR, MIR, JAFFIER: Nawab of Bengal 1757–60 and 1763–5: 31, 40, 49–54, 61, 64, 68, 94, 101, 171, 172, 194.
JAGARNATH, JUGGERNAUT, temple at Puri in Orissa: 23, 179 pilgrimages to.
JAGAT SETH FATH CHAND (*see* Seth), nephew of Manik Chand: 22.
JAGIR, JAGHIR, JAGHIRE, JAGHEER, a tract of land made over to some person on condition of military or political service, the revenue being assigned to them and usually to their heirs. 'A tenure in which the public revenues of a given tract of land were made over to a servant of the State together with the powers to collect revenue and administer general government' (H. H. Wilson): 10, 57 Clive's jagir, 71, 159 jagir rents, 198 Shitab Roy's jagir.
JAGIRDAR, holder of a jagir: 11, 17, 135, 279.
JAPAN, 37.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

JATS, JAUTS, a hardy race from the north-west, connected with ancient Getae: 185.
JEHANGIRNAGAR (*see* Dacca), JEHANGHEERNUGGUR, 23, 77.
JELLPYE GOWRIE, JALPAIGURI, JULPIGOREE, town in Rajshahi: 214.
JESSARUT CAWN, Naib at Dacca in 1765: 77.
JESSORE, town and district in the Presidency Division, Bengal: 91, 202 settlement of, 211 dacoity in, 228 salt in, 247, 307.
JIMMIDAR, JEMETDAR, JAMADAR, a native officer or captain, subordinate to the darogo: 31 note.
JOHNSON, DR. SAMUEL, autocrat of English literature in reign of George III: 102.
JOHNSTONE, JOHN: arrived at Calcutta in 1751, Custom master in 1762: 70.
JONES, JOHN: Lieutenant 1765, Captain 1767, died 1773 at Kuch Behar: 212–13.
JUDGE-ADVOCATE-GENERAL, chief judicial authority over East India Company's military forces; office created by Hastings 1772 (see *Bengal Letters received*, vol. xi, p. 403): 177. *See* Stewart.
JUDGES, PUISNE: 318.
JUGGERNAUT: *see* Jagarnath.
JUMMA, JAMA, total assessment for land revenue (cf. *jum*, primitive, shifting cultivation practised by non-Aryan races in Bengal): 261.
— BUND, -BUNDY, rent-roll: 71.
— TOOMAR: *see* Toomar jumma.
JUMMA-WAUSIL-BAUKEE: 268.
JUNGLE TERAI, JANGUL TERAI, low forest land, a tract of country in Monghir: 180, 217–18.
JUSTICE: 6, 10, 11, 21, 27, 32, 63, 64 first British courts of, 87–8, 113 note, 117 absence of, 128, 134, 141 Company's servants under British court of, 156 principles of, 196, 202 new courts of, 209 evidence in courts of, 222–6 plan of, 268, 295 in civil cases, 308–38 new system of, 309 native courts of, 319 plan of, 326–7 Justice of the Peace.
— CHARTER OF, a charter granted in 1726 and renewed in 1728, established the Mayor's Court at Calcutta: 328.
KABUL, CABUL, capital and province of Afghanistan: 179.
KANUNGO, CANONGO, a native Revenue inspector: 11, 16, 18, 297, 310, 313, 322, 324.
KARKUN, CARCOON, a clerk, writer, inferior revenue officer: 298, 300.
KASI, CAUZEE, a Mahomedan judge administering law according to the Koran: 27, 273, 310, 314, 324.
KASIM ALI KHAN, CUSSIM ALLY CAWN, Nawab of Bengal from 1760 to 1763: 42, 51, 53, 56, 58, 68–71, 93–9, 101, 165, 172.
KASIMBAZAR: *see* Cossimbazar.
KELSALL, THOMAS: arrived at Calcutta 1767, Chief at Dacca 1770: 89, 293.
KHALARRIES, COLLARIES, salt workings: 247, 249.
KHALSA, the exchequer, the chief revenue office: as applied to lands the term means those lands of which the revenue remains the property of the Government, not being made over as jagir to any other parties, the rents being collected directly by the Government: 11, 27, 71, 159, 194, 202 works smoothly, 230, 234, 287, 291, 295 reform of, 313, 324, 327, 328 risks of attendance at.
KHAN JAFAR, another name for Murshid Kuli Khan (q. v.).
KHARIF, KHAREEF, autumn harvest of rice in Bengal.
KHAS, land directly managed by the *khalsa* officials: 10, 260, 270.
KHATTAH, KHATA, daily account-book, used also for warehouse or office.
KHOJAH, KWAJA, a rich or respectable Armenian, an opulent merchant: 23.
KILLICAN, DAVID: arrived at Calcutta August 18, 1773, as factor (this man appears to have been a free merchant in 1772): 246–7.
KILLPATRICK, JAMES, MAJOR: sent from Madras to refugees at Fulta, July 14, 1756, joins Council there: 45.
KING: *see* Mogul.
KING OF GREAT BRITAIN, 104.
KING'S FRIENDS, the Tory clique at the Court of George III: 121.
KISHNAGAR, KISHENAGUR, town and district lying along the Ganges, north-east of Calcutta: 260, 334.

KISHNCHAND, KISSEN CHUND, Raja of Nuddea, held land to south of Calcutta: 328.
KIST, KISTBUNDY, KISTI-BANDI, settlement of the instalments of the revenue; any document relating to fixed periodical payments of the revenue or of a debt: 86–90, 194, 261, 271, 274.
KNOX, CAPTAIN RANDFURLIE: served under Major Caillaud against the Shahzada and the Nawab at Patna in 1760 (see Life by S. C. Hill): 174.
KOLS, a barbarous tribe inhabiting forest and mountain tracts in Benares, South Bihar, and Chota Nagpur, perhaps aborigines: 2.
KORA, CORAH, province in Oudh: 53, 55, 116 granted to Oudh, 128, 139 raided by Marathas, 166.
KORAN, sacred book of the Mahomedans: 4, 325, 331.
KOS, COSS, a measure of distance, between one and two miles.
KOTWAL, COOTWAL, chief officer of police, superintendent of a market: 20, 21, 24, 310.
KROR: *see* Crore.
KUCH BEHAR: *see* Cooch Behar.
KURRAH, KARRAH, one of the nine Circars of Allahabad: 185.

LAC, STICK-LAC, resin from the peepul and other trees: 19.
LAC, LACK, LAK, LAKH, a sum of 100,000 rupees, worth £10,000 in the eighteenth century.
LAKNAUTI, old name of the early capital of Bengal: *see* Gaur.
LAMBERT, WILLIAM: arrived 1760, fourth at Dacca 1769: 334.
LAND TENURE, SYSTEM OF: *see* Settlement.
LANE, THOMAS: arrived at Calcutta in 1756, Chief at Patna in 1773: 204, 274.
LAW, HINDU AND MAHOMEDAN: 4, 27.
— BRITISH, unfit for natives: 124, 157 native law to continue, 158, 311 British law inapplicable, 337 code of Hindu law.
LAWRELL, JAMES: arrived at Calcutta in 1758, second at Burdwan in 1765, Secretary to Committee of Trade in 1766, member of Revenue Board in 1774: 186, 256, 274, 337.
LEASES ON LONG TERMS: 84–7, Burdwan system of, 151, 249, 256–86 reasons for, 312.
LEYCESTER, RALPH: arrived at Calcutta 1753, Commissary-general in 1764, Customs-master 1765: 58.
LIGHT INFANTRY, force created in 1772: 179.
LONDON, 32, 112.
LORDS, HOUSE OF, 113.
LUCKIPORE, LAKHIPUR, LAKSHMIPUR, JAGDEA, town in Noakhali district, Bengal, a subordinate factory of the East India Company, also called Jagdea: 36, 77, 93.
LUSHINGTON, HENRY: arrived at Calcutta in 1755, second at Patna in 1762, Chief at Hugli in 1772: 201–2, 248 report from, 275, 316, 328–9.

MACASSAR: Dutch port in Celebes, occupied by British in 1815: 19.
MACAULAY, THOMAS BABINGTON, First Baron, 1800–59: historian, President of Commission on Indian Criminal Code in 1835–8: 95.
MACKENZIE, DAVID: Lieutenant 1765, Captain December 16, 1767, dismissed the Company's service for exactions, after court-martial November 23, 1771—January 13, 1772: 271.
MACLEANE, LIEUT.-COLONEL LAUCHLAN: Commissary-General, resigned 1774, agent for Hastings in England 1776–7: 265.
MADRAS, Presidency on Carnatic coast: 32, 46, 56, 105, 107–11 Hastings's report from, 110 Madras jagir, 115, 143 Hastings's work in Madras commended, 170 financial dependence of, 220, 222, 233, 318.
MAGELLAN STRAITS, 40, 74.
MAGISTRATE: 12 Zemindar as, 124, 148, 153–8 native magistrates, 311, 313 reforms.
MAHAL, MAL, MHAL, (1) aggregate of plots of land held under one family title; (2) fiscal term for property: 230 the salt mahal, 248–9.
MAHARAJA, MAHRAJA, MAHARANGA, a supreme or sovereign prince, applied loosely as courtesy title to all Rajas: 17, 195, 196.
MAHATO, village scribe: 6.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

MAHMUDTHY, town in Calcutta division: 307.
MAHOMEDANS, followers of Mahomet: 2, 3, 17, 53, 285, 333, Mahomedan law 325–7, 331–2.
MALDIVE ISLANDS, 19.
MALGUZARI, (1) revenue assessment; (2) person or land paying revenue: 76, 85, 211, 270.
MALIKANA, MALEKANA, dues of the malik or proprietor of land: 284.
MALWA, Central Indian tableland, Maratha States of Gwalior and Indore: 15.
MANGAN, MONGEN, a free gift or benevolence: *see* Mongen.
MAN OF KENT, nickname of John Cartier (q. v.): 114 note.
MANSFIELD, SIR JAMES, 1733–1821; Lord Chief Justice, K.C. 1772, M.P. 1779: 103.
'MANSFIELD,' East India Company's ship: 102.
MARATHAS, MAHRATTAS, MARATTAS, MORATTAES, Hindu descendants and followers of Sivaji (q. v.): 2, 7, 54, 85 raids of, 115–16, 122, 138, 167–9 tribute to, 169, 181–9, 261, 276, 323.
MARRIOTT, RANDOLPH: arrived at Calcutta in 1753, second at Chittagong in 1762: 44 note.
MASULIPATAM, BANDAR: head-quarters of Kistna district, Madras, seaport and early European settlement: 30.
MAULDA, MALDAH, town in Bhagalpur district, Bengal, ancient capital of Bengal, later a subordinate factory: 36, 245.
MAUND, MAN, a measure of weight containing 82⅔ lb. avoirdupois: 230, 249.
MAYOR'S COURT, British court of justice for Calcutta and district, created or remodelled in 1726 (*see* Charter of Justice): 32–3, 124, 140 range of jurisdiction of, 150, 157 authority of court over natives, 177 defied, 281, 315, 328–9.
MEGHNA RIVER, combined estuary of Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers: 36.
MEMOIR OF WARREN HASTINGS, written by P. C., *circa* 1820: 102.
MHATUTE, MATUTE, MATHAUT, MULTOUT, MUTTAOOT: capitation, poll-tax; in Bengal an extra cess: 87, 159, 261, 274.
MIDDLETON, NATHANIEL: arrived at Calcutta in June 1770, Assistant to the Resident at Murshidabad in 1772–3, Resident in Oudh 1774: 256, 274, 334.
MIDDLETON, SAMUEL: arrived at Calcutta in 1753, second at Luckipore in 1762, second in Council, Resident at Murshidabad and Chief at Kasimbazar 1772, President of Board of Trade 1774: 70.
MIDNAPORE, town and district in Burdwan district, Bengal: 64, 94–6, 115, 202 settlement of, 228, 245, 248, 277 settlement of, 288, 293, 297, 300.
MILITARY FORCES of the East India Company in Bengal: 33, 48, 55–6, 60–1, 67–8, 118, 123, 129, 133, 135, 139, 152, 154, 166, 170, 176–8, 181–9.
— of the Nawab: 61.
MILITIA, 13, 33.
MINEAR UL DOWLAH: *see* Muneir-ud-Daula.
MINISTRY, the native governor acting for the Nawab of Bengal under British direction: 89, 166–74.
MINT MASTER: 133 under Committee of Accounts.
MINTS: 164–5 provincial mints abolished, 234.
MIR JAFAR, MIR KASIM: *see* Jafar *and* Kasim.
MIR MUNEER, 253.
MISRULE IN BENGAL: 104 causes of, 135 of Mohamed Reza Khan, 151 reform of.
MOCHA, 19.
MOCURRERY, MUKARRARI, tenure held at a fixed rate of rent or revenue, leases for life: 303.
MOFUSSIL, provincial land and its administration: 150, 194, 209, 241, 306, 324.
— ADALUT DIWANI, 312.
MOGUL, Mahomedan Emperor of India: 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 26–7, 30, 32, 48, 54, 101, 115–16, 147 tribute to Mogul withheld, 151, 167 Mogul system revived, 183–9 Mogul in Maratha hands, 285.
MOHAMED ALI KHAN, Nawab of Arcot 1750–95: 103, 127.
MOHAMED REZA KHAN, MOHAMED REZA CAWN, MOHAMED RIZA KHAN: Naib of Dacca under Mir

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Jafar, Naib Nazim of Bengal under Clive's dual system, tried by Council of Calcutta in 1772, acquitted 1773: 54, 61, 64–5, 72–3, 75–7, 118–19, 128, 134, 135, 166, 171–3 trial of, 189, 199, 203, 287.

MOHORE, MOHIR, MUHARRIR, MOHURRI, MOREA, a scribe: 88, 259, 274, 298, 300.

MOHTESIB, native officer of justice (cf. *muhasib*, an auditor of accounts): 310.

MOLUNGIS, a low-caste people inhabiting the coast lands of Bengal and Orissa, salt-workers: 19, 228, 284–5.

MONEY-LENDING: *see* Usury.

MONGEN, MANGAN, MANGRIA, gift, asking; exaction made by customs officers: 80, 270.

MONGHIR, town and district in Bengal, lying between Ramgur and the Ganges: 58, 180, 218.

MONOPOLY: 40, 50, 58–60, 80, 118, 132 inland trade monopoly, 137, 142, 228, 231.

MONSON, GEORGE: Major in regular army, entered East India service in 1758, Brigadier-General in 1763, member of Council in 1774, died 1776: 265.

MOREA: *see* Mohore.

MORRISON, MAJOR JOHN: military adventurer in service of the Mogul in 1772: 184.

MOULAVIE (cf. *mulla*), Mahomedan doctor of law: 314, 324, 331.

MOZA, a district equivalent to an English tithing: 156.

MUBAREK-UD-DAULA, youngest of three sons of Mir Jafar; succeeded his brother Saif-ud-Daula as Nawab of Bengal in March 1770, died in 1773 at Murshidabad: 171, 192.

MUFTI, MUFTEE, official exponent of Mahomedan law: 310, 314, 324.

MUGG, MAGH, a native of Arakan; made piratical raids on the coast of Bengal annually.

MUKARRARI: *see* Mocurrery.

MULBERRY, cultivation of: 236.

MULTOUT: *see* Mhatute.

MUNEIR-UD-DAULA, minister to Shah Alum: 185–6.

MUNNI BEGUM, mother of Nujum-ud-Daula, Nawab of Bengal: 171, 192, 197, 330, 335–6.

MURDER, Hindu law concerning: 333.

MURGATCHA, MURAGACHHA, MOORAGAUTCHA, village and zemindari in Nadia, twelve miles north-west of Krishnagar: 160, 246. [N.B. Moragatcha is a fort south of Fulta.]

MURSHID KULI KHAN, Nawab of Bengal 1704–26; founder of Murshidabad, ancestor of Siraj-ud-Daula: 23.

MURSHIDABAD, MUXADAVAD, MAKSUDABAD, capital of Bengal 1726–72: 23, 27, 44, 64, 72, 78, 91, 93, 146 Board of Revenue at, 104 mint at, 226 custom-house at, 245, 255 Poonah held at, 261 importance of, 287–8, 293, 334.

MUSNUD, MASNAD, cushion which takes the place of throne in the East: 27.

MUSTER (cf. German *Muster*), a pattern or sample: 38, 46.

MUTAHID, MUTTAHID, a farmer, publican, or contractor for the rents: 11, 17, 28.

MUTINY, 213–14.

MUTSADDI, MUTASADDI, a writer: 11, 18, 72, 73, 194, 270, 297.

MUTTAOOT: *see* Mhatute.

MUXADAVAD: *see* Murshidabad.

MYSADEL, district in the Calcutta Division: 307.

NADIR SHAH, ruler of Persia, captured Delhi in 1738: 224.

NADIYAH, capital of Bengal: 23.

NAGPUR, NAGPORE, territory of the Maratha Bhonsla family; lapsed to British in 1853; south-westernmost district of Bengal in eighteenth century: 2.

NAIB, deputy; NAIBUT, office of Naib; NAIB SUBA or — NAZIM or — DIWAN, the Deputy Nawab, or Nizam. This office was held by Mohamed Reza Khan in Bengal and Shitab Rai in Bihar from 1765 to 1772: 14, 61, 72–3, 151, 171, 173, 190, 287–91 Naib Diwan, 307.

NAJAY, a tax levied in Bengal upon cultivators to make up any deficit arising from the death of their neighbours: 257, 260, 297.

NANCAR, probably a payment of fees for registration. The word seems to be derived from *náma* = a written document: 300.

NANDCOMAR: *see* Nuncomar.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

NAWAB, NABOB, deputy-governor of a province for the Mogul emperor: 9, 10 position and powers of, 14, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24 independence of, 25–7, 30, 82 powers of, 160, 166, 167 a nonentity, 189–98 Nawab's household, 327 nominal judicial head, 336 youth of.
NAWAB, of Arcot, 103, 127.
— of Orissa, 30.
NAZIM: *see* Nizam.
NAZIR DIR, Raja of Kuch Behar: 212.
NIZAM or NAWAB, administrator, viceroy. Originally a military chief exercising criminal and police jurisdiction by virtue of command of troops.
NIZAM OF HAIDERABAD, the Nizam ul Mulk, viceroy of the Moguls but independent after 1707: 115.
NIZAMUT, the native government, originally criminal and military jurisdiction, later general native jurisdiction much restricted: 10, 11, 14, 18, 27, 48, 61, 65, 73, 117–19, 171–2, 219, 287, 308, 312, 324, 331.
NON-INTERVENTION, policy of East India Company and British Government with regard to native states: 116, 127–8, 139.
NORTH, FREDERICK, second Earl of Guilford, 1732–92: Chancellor of Exchequer 1767, First Lord of Treasury 1770–82: 102–4, 317.
NOVEMBERBUND, the October crop of raw silk in Bengal, marketed in the following month: 43, 46.
NUDDEA, a district formerly in the Calcutta Division, now distinct: 307.
NUJUM, NAJIM-UD-DAULA, Nawab of Bengal, succeeded his father Mir Jafar in 1765, died 1766: 54, 61, 72, 112.
NUNCOMAR, NANDKUMAR, NUNDOOCOMAR, NUNDCOMAR, 1720–75: a Brahmin, Faujdar of Hugli about 1756, intriguer at courts of Siraj-ud-Daula and Mir Jafar against the British, executed for forgery under British law in 1775, father of Goordass: 172, 194–7.
NUZZERANA, NAJARANI, NUZZARS, NAZR, a forced contribution, a benevolence: 56–7, 75, 84, 274, 277.
OIL, 19, 308.
OMSID, ALLY CAWN, ALI KHAN, chief customs officer at Murshidabad in 1765: 79.
OPIUM, drug made from poppy juice, largely grown in Bihar: 19, 59, 129, 133, 219, 231–2, 252–3.
ORISSA, province adjoining Bengal on south-west, made over to the East India Company in 1765: 2, 19, 23, 30, 54, 61, 105, 127.
OUDH, province of Mogul Empire adjoining Bihar on the north, ruled by Vizier Shuja-ud-Daula in 1772: 26, 36, 53–5, 101, 116, 169, 219, 227, 232.
OUTCRY, auction: 246, 251.

PACHEAT, PATCHETE, town and district lying west of Burdwan: 202, 245, 274.
PACHOWTRAH (DROGAH), PACHOLTRA, PACHAUTRAH, PACHUTRA, PANCHOTRA, PUTCHUTTERA, the chief custom-house in a district: 78–9, 198, 273.
PAGODA, a gold or silver coin used in Southern India.
PANIPUT, PANIPET, scene of several decisive battles in 1526, 1556, 1739, and 1761. In the last the Afghans with allies defeated the Mogul: 54.
PARGANA, PERGUNNAH, subdivision of the Sirkar or district; the largest division of land in a Zemindari: 10, 16, 56, 75, 156 equivalent to English Hundred, 313.
— The Twenty-four Parganas, the Calcutta Pargana, a district belonging to the East India Company as a Zemindari. It reached from Calcutta to Sagar on the Hugli (*see* Rennell's *Bengal Atlas* and *Bengal District Gazetteer*): 44 note, 48, 56, 202 settlement of, 228–9, 274, 281.
— BATTALIONS, a special force of the East India Company's distributed through the districts to enforce the collections of revenue from 1765 to 1773: 56, 60, 177, 179, 213, 217, 259, 271 character of, 322.
PARLIAMENT, 112, 143, 225, 263, 317.
PATEL, PATHEL, headman of a village, now only found in Southern and Western India: 6.
PATHAN, an Afghan tribe: 3, 26.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

PATNA, ancient capital of Bihar: 23, 30, 36, 55–6, 91, 146 Board of Revenue at, 164 mint at, 226 custom-house at, 231 grows opium, 232 grows saltpetre, 235, 238, 245, 253, 261, 278, 287–8, 293, 304 Patna division, 307.
PATWARI, village scribe, later revenue officer: 6.
PEON (cf. *pawn*), 25, 28–9, 71–2, 76–7, 269.
PERMANENT REFORM OF REVENUE SYSTEM, 259, 304–6.
PERSIA, PERSIAN: 5, 19, 42, 224, 245, 285, 356.
PERWANNAH, PARWANA, an order, licence, or writ: 80, 135.
PESHCAR, PESHKAR, an agent or deputy, a subordinate revenue officer: 274.
PESHCUSH, PESHKASH, firstfruits, present, quit-rent.
PESHWAR, PEISHWAR, the chief minister of the Maratha power till 1817: 115.
PHIRMAND, PHIRMAUND, FIRMAN, FARMAN, an order, mandate, or patent: 128.
PICAR, PAIKAR, a retail dealer, a pedlar.
PIKE, PAIK, PYKE, an armed attendant, messenger, watchman: 79, 220, 246–7, 326.
PITT, THOMAS, 1653–1726: East India merchant, Governor of Madras, grandfather of Lord Chatham: 23.
— WILLIAM, 1759–1806: second son of Lord Chatham, Prime Minister 1783: 94, 171, 322–3.
PLASSEY, site of British victory which procured us Bengal in 1757, in northern district of Nadia: 10, 30, 41, 46–7, 48, 93, 160, 227, 320–1.
PLAYDELL, CHARLES STAFFORD: arrived at Calcutta in 1744, writer, senior merchant, Resident at Balasore in 1757: 93.
POLAMOW, PALAMAU, district in Chota Nagpur Division, Bengal, westernmost district of Bengal: 2, 218.
POLICE, 13, 27, 131, 158.
POONA, capital of the Maratha Peishwar: 171.
POONAH, POONIAH, annual session of the native court to deal with revenue assessment: 62, 255, 280, 287.
POOS, PUS: the name of a Hindu month, December–January: 313.
POPHAM, WILLIAM: Captain in East India forces August 7, 1760, Major 1780, Major-General 1795, died 1821 in London: 223.
PORTUGUESE IN INDIA, 20, 52.
POTTAH, PATTA, PUTTA, PATA, a deed of lease: 18, 260.
PRESENTS, 57, 60.
PRESIDENT, PRESIDENCY, supreme officer of East India Company in each of the three provinces; governor: 31–4, 37, 40–1, 49, 51, 53–4, 56, 94, 116, 120, 123 President's control of Council, 126, 133 exceptional power of, 150 duties of, 154, 166, 175, 194, 200, 265, 306, 313–14, 317, 326 Courts of Justice at Presidency, 327.
PRICES, 224, 238–9 of silk, 241 of rice.
PRINCE OF WALES, 321.
PRIVATE TRADE, trade between places within the Company's area, permitted to their servants: 32, 35, 40, 50, 94, 101 Warren Hastings's private trade, 132 trade 'from port to port in India'.
PROVINCIAL COUNCILS, Revenue Councils set up in 1775 by the Temporary Plan, superseded in 1781: 251, 259, 291–2, 307–8.
PUDDA RIVER, PADDA, PADMA, lower part of the Ganges River, flowing south-east from Kasihathi to join the Brahmaputra estuary: 43 note 2.
PUNCHEEK, PANCHAKI, a tax of a fifth levied by Zemindars in excess of the proper assessment: 261.
PUNDIT, PANDIT, a Hindu scholar or officer of law: 253, 337.
PURLING, CHARLES: Collector of Rungpore 1772: 208.
— JOHN: chairman of the Court of Directors in 1771–2: 103, 114 note, 146, 181.
PURNEA, town and district in Bhagalpur Division, Bengal: 64, 91, 232 grows saltpetre, 256 desolation of.
PUTNEY, PATNI: (1) goods manufactured to order; (2) raw silk not wound off, 46; (3) perpetual lease.
— AURUNGS, weaving villages near Rampur: 43, 46.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

QUERIES, Warren Hastings's suggestions for reform of native criminal law: 332–4.

RABI, RABIA, the spring; spring crops.
RADANAGORE, local name of silk in Burdwan: 238.
RAHMUDSHAHEE (? Mahmudshi, *see* Rennell's *Bengal Atlas*, ix), 211.
RAJ, rule, principality: 19 note, 66.
RAJA, Hindu prince or landowner: 17, 24, 56, 328.
RAJABULLUB, RAJ BALLABH, a Bengali of Dacca: commanded a fleet of police boats, father of Krishna Das, guardian of Mir Jafar's sons, rival of Mir Kasim: 96, 296.
RAJESHAHI, RAJSHAHI, RAUJSHAHI, RADSHAY: district in Eastern Bengal, former capital Murshidabad: 20, 75, 265.
RAJMAHAL, former Mahomedan capital of Bengal, later a subordinate factory, now a village: 23, 36, 213, 217.
RAMCHURN PUNDIT, opium farmer: 253.
RAMGUR, RAMGARH, ancient district of Bengal, lying between Palamau and Monghir: 218.
RAMNASAIN, RAJA, Naib of Bahar 1757–60, imprisoned for peculation by Mir Kasim and drowned 1763: 68–9.
RAMPUR BOALIA, town in Rajshahi, head-quarters of silk industry: 43.
RECORDS, 137, 314, 325.
REED, JOHN: arrived in Calcutta 1760, second in Council of Revenue at Murshidabad 1770, sixth in Council 1772, Chief at Chittagong 1774: 42, 246, 274, 293.
REGULATING ACT, passed by Lord North in 1773: 104, 125, 230, 316, 318.
REGULATIONS OF TRADE: 58, 119 note, 122–3, 151, 152 'Separate Regulations', 152–65 'Proposed Regulations'.
RENNELL, JAMES: Captain, appointed Surveyor-general in 1764: 235.
RESIDENT, British agent at Murshidabad, Patna, Oudh, or other native capitals; used occasionally of district chiefs: 45, 49, 54, 62, 64–6, 76, 90, 93–5, 117, 124, 129, 172, 197.
REVENUE, REVENUE COLLECTIONS: 8, 11, 12, 18, 22, 24–5, 27–8, 40–1, 49, 53, 56–7, 60–73, 77, 79, 83, 116, 119, 122–6 settlement of, 128, 136 control of, 138 decrease in, 150 reform of collections, 151 season, 156 native collectors, 159–64 regulations concerning, 203 reforms of, 218 of hill country, 219, 236, 255–308 reforms affecting, 319, 328.
— (1) Boards founded at Murshidabad and Patna in June 1770: 56, 67, 91, 120–1, 149, 287, 297. These supplement the Calcutta Revenue Department.
— (2) Committee of the Calcutta Council for Revenue, or Controlling Council of, created April 1, 1771, to supersede (1): 225, 229, 256–7, 288.
— (3) Supreme Board of Revenue created August 20, 1772: 288–95 supersedes all existing Revenue Boards.
RESOLUTIONS FOR SETTLEMENT OF LANDS, 258, 274–7.
RESPONSIBILITY FOR GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL: 147 divorced from power, 166 of East India Company acknowledged, 226 assumed.
REVOLUTION IN GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL, 285.
RIDER, JACOB: arrived at Calcutta in 1763, Supervisor of Kistnagar in 1772: 89.
ROCKINGHAM, LORD, second Marquess, 1730–82: 102.
ROHILLAS, ROHILKAND, ROHILCUND, Afghan conquerors of Rohilkand, who threw off the Mogul rule in 1744. State lying between Delhi and Oudh: 169 character of, 170, 181–9 expedition against.
ROSEWELL, JOHN: arrived in Calcutta 1765, assistant in Secretary's office 1766, naval storekeeper 1772, and one of the agents for clothing Pargana sepoys: 292.
ROSSALAH, a troop of cavalry: 55.
ROUS, CHARLES WILLIAM BOUGHTON: arrived at Calcutta in 1765, Supervisor of Radshahi in 1772: 89, 336.
ROWANNAH, a pass or permit: 80, 245, 249.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

ROY, revenue officer: 76.
ROY DOOLUB, RAI DURLABH, Diwan under Siraj-ud-Daula, captures Calcutta in 1756, makes terms with British, Naib of Orissa in 1765: 61, 72.
ROYROYAN, supreme revenue officer under the Diwan, head of the Khalsa: 11, 14, 25, 71, 198 of Bihar, 287, 289, 296.
RUNGPORE, RANGPUR, a town and district in Eastern Bengal: 52, 179, 212–3.
RUPEE, common silver coin of India.
— SICCA. 'The new sicca or the current coin of the current year, is the medium by which the rest are estimated.' (Note by Warren Hastings.) In 1773 the sicca rupee weighed 179·666 gr. troy. In 1793 the sicca rupee was worth 179·13 grains of silver = 2*s.* 2*d.*: 164–5, 233–4.
— CHALANI, common current rupee, 116 being equal to 100 sicca rupees.
— DELL (? Delhi), current at the Putney Aurungs: 46.
— DUSMUSSA, minted at Murshidabad or Dacca: 164.
— ELY, minted at Patna: 164.
RUSSELL, probably a free merchant: 247.
RYOT, REIAT, RAIYAT, a peasant cultivator: 5, 9, 21, 28–9, 38, 76, 80–2, 84, 87, 121, 124, 219, 257, 320.
RYOTWARI, a system of tenure in which each ryot is separately responsible for the revenue as contrasted with joint village-holding. It is now restricted to Southern India, though once common in Bengal: 6.

SADR, Supreme, applied to Calcutta Courts of Appeal, SADR DIWANI and SADR FAUJDARI: 313, 324, 326.
SAHIR, a custom-house (cf. *saïr* = duties and customs levied at Hugli): 241.
SAIF-UD-DAULA, Nawab of Bengal from 1766 to 1770, son of Mir Jafar.
SALAMI, a douceur, a complimentary present: 274.
SALARIES, 34, 35, 40, 108 Madras salaries, 134 reduced salaries, 308.
SALSETTE, island off Bombay, permanently acquired by the British in 1783: 128.
SALT, 19, 21, 50, 58–60, 80, 129, 135, 141, 219, 228–32 monopoly, 244 duties, 252 Hastings's plan, 284–5.
SALTPETRE, a natural product of Bihar: 19, 36, 133, 219, 232.
SANAD, SUNNUD, diploma, charter, or patent: 8, 14, 15, 16, 24, 40, 186, 327.
SARFAREZ KHAN, Nawab of Bengal, 1739–40: 22.
SASTRA, SHASTER, a Hindu scripture, a work of authority: 325.
SATGAON, a ruined city in the Hugli district, a former commercial capital: 23.
SCRAFTON, LUKE: arrived in Calcutta 1746, fourth at Dacca in 1753, Clive's agent at Court of Siraj-ud-Daula: 66, 93, 94, 113.
SECRET COMMITTEE OF THE CALCUTTA COUNCIL. First met on August 22, 1756, on board the schooner *Phoenix*. Members: R. Drake, W. Watts, Major Killpatrick, John Holwell. Members in 1772: Hastings, Barker, and Aldersey.
SECRETARY TO THE COUNCIL, 35, 37, 42, 203, 204, 293.
SEER, a measure of weight, containing 2 lb.
SEKKETOUL, capital of Rohilkand: 169.
SELECT COMMITTEE OF THE CALCUTTA COUNCIL, created by order of the Directors on December 15, 1756: 58, 59, 62, 67, 133 constitution and powers of, 317.
SENIOR, ASCANIUS WILLIAM: arrived at Calcutta in 1753, second at Dacca in 1762: 70.
SENIASSEE: *see* Suniassee.
SEPOY, native soldier, originally a horseman: 34, 54–5, 151, 212–18, 274, 306, 308.
SERVANTS OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY: 33–5, 40, 42, 72–3, 108–9, 112, 119, 120, 131–2 duties and salaries of, 133, 137, 139, 140 junior servants, 142, 168 character of, 244 senior servants, 308, 315.
SETH, SETT, Hindu bankers of eminence of the Jain sect who settled at Govindpur in sixteenth century: 22, 31, 234.
— MAHTAB RAI, grandson of Fath Chand Jagat Seth.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

SETH, SARUP CHAND, grandson of Jagat Seth.
SETTLEMENT OF THE LANDS: 90–2, 122, 151 need for, 159–62 proposed regulations for, 255–86 actual Regulations for, 258–66 further Regulations for, 263 plan of 1775 for, 319.
SEZAWILS, supervisors or collectors of revenue: 157 Regulation 6, note, 160.
SHAH ALAM, Mogul emperor 1759–1806, lived at Allahabad 1765–71, in power of Rohillas and Marathas 1771–8: 31, 53–5, 61.
SHAHBUNDER, officer of customs at Dacca, harbour-master: 273.
SHAH JEHAN, Mogul emperor 1627–58: 10.
SHARES IN EAST INDIA COMPANY, 112, 113.
SHASTER: *see* SASTRA.
SHICDAR, SICKDAR, revenue officer appointed by Khalsa or by Zemindar to collect from a small district: 247, 269, 287, 311.
SHIPPING, East India Company's ships: *Asia*, 237; *Greenwich*, 183; *Harcourt*, 290, 303; *Hector*, 198; *Lord Holland*, 236; *Resolution*, 238; *Rochford*, 141; *Rockingham*, 217.
SHITAB ROY, MOHAMED, native of Delhi: Diwan at Patna, Naib-Nazim under the Dual System in Bihar 1765–72, died 1773: 61, 166–7, 192 trial of, 196, 198, 199, 203.
SHORE, SIR JOHN, First Lord Teignmouth, 1751–1834: arrived at Calcutta 1769, assistant to Resident at Murshidabad and superintendent of Adalut November 1773, returned to England 1785–7, Governor-General 1793–8: 12, 255, 262, 264, 266, 292, 323.
SHROFF, Hindu banker or money-changer: 21–2, 27, 85, 161, 165, 234, 254.
SHUJA-UD-DAULA, SHUJA DOWLA, SUJA DOWLA, Naib Wazir of Oudh 1754–5: 54–5, 116, 134 trade with, 170, 181–9, 227, 279.
SHUJA SULTAN, Nawab of Bengal, 1639–60, brother of Aurungzeb: 30.
SILK, 3, 19, 20, 36, 43, 81, 129, 142 price of, 236 worm culture confined to one caste.
SINDHIA MAHADJI, Maratha Chief of Gwalior: defeated at Panipat by Ahmad Shah in 1761, controlled Delhi 1769–74, made treaty with British 1782: 115–16, 167.
SIR, cultivator's holding: 9.
SIRAJ-UD-DAULA, Nawab of Bengal 1756–7, son of Ali Verdi Khan: captured Kasimbazar and Calcutta in 1756, defeated at Plassey 1757 and killed: 40, 41, 44, 47, 93.
SIRDAR, SARDAR, a chief, headman, or commander.
SIRKAR, CIRCAR, SIRCAR: (1) subdivision of a province or suba; (2) Northern Circars, the five northernmost provinces of Madras, acquired by the British in 1768: 10, 76–7, 127, 137, 156, 272.
SIVAJI, founder of the Maratha power, 1627–80: 115.
SMITH, ADAM, 1723–90, political economist, author of *Wealth of Nations*: 322.
— CHARLES: arrived at Madras in 1753, sub-export-warehousekeeper in 1770: 103, 109, 223.
SMITH or SMYTH, HARRY: arrived at Calcutta in 1749, factor at Luckipore in 1757: 93.
— N., Chairman of Directors 1784: 96 note.
SOCIETY OF TRADE: *see* Committee of Trade.
SOUBAH, SUBA, a province, a government: 9, 10, 68, 72, 75.
SOUBAHDAR, military deputy, governor of a province under the Moguls, Captain of East India Company's forces.
SPECIE, 85, 233.
SPENCER, HON. JOHN: arrived in Calcutta 1764, second in Council, President 1764: 53, 112 Spencer's Councillors prosecuted, 118.
STEWART, JOHN: arrived at Calcutta August 29, 1772, secretary, clerk to Court of Appeals, Judge-Advocate-General in 1773 (?)–7, received Lieutenant-Colonel's pay; 203 Secretary to Council at Calcutta, 265.
— ROBERT. There were two Robert Stewarts in the service simultaneously: (1) Cadet 1764, Captain 1770, died 1820; (2) Ensign 1765, Captain 1770, died 1780: 180, 214–15.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

STIPEND, Revenue or pension paid to the Nawab by the Company: 118, 129, 184, 233.
STOREKEEPER, 37, 204.
STUART, CHARLES, son of Lord Bute: arrived in Calcutta 1762, secretary to the Commander-in-Chief 1765, Supervisor 1769, Resident at Burdwan 1772: 89, 90.
SUBORDINATE FACTORIES, 32, 36, 42, 76, 78, 131–2, 137, 156 footing of, 237.
SUDDER: *see* Sadr.
SUDDER UL HUE CAWN, President of the Sadr Faujdari under the Nawab: 336.
SUJA DOWLA, SUJA UL DOWLA: *see* Shuja.
SULIVAN, LAWRENCE: Director of East India Company, Deputy Chairman in 1773, afterwards Chairman: 103, 199, 265.
SUMNER, BRIGHTWELL: arrived at Calcutta 1744, fifth in 1761, second in 1766: 58.
— JOHN: arrived at Calcutta 1764, assistant in Secret Department: 93.
SUNIASSEE, SUNNYASI, SENIASSEE, SONASSY, SANNYASI: one who abandons the world; religious banditti: 178–9, 213–17, 235, 245.
SUNNUD: *see* Sanad.
SUPERNUMERARY BATTALIONS, 217.
SUPERVISORS, English officials to supervise the revenue collections (for Commission of Supervisors, *see* Commission): 65–7, 85–92, up-country, 113, 116, 118–19 reports from, 120 'heavy rulers', 133, 142 ill effects of, 145 withdrawn, 146, 148–9 powers of, 150, 156, 190, 228, 255, 258 made collectors, 287.
SUPREME COURT OF JUSTICE: set up by Regulating Act, 281.
SURAJAH DOWLA: *see* Siraj-ud-Daula.
SURAT, first British station in India, north of Bombay: 127.
SURVEY, 235.
SUTALUTI, SUTANUTI, Calcutta village: *see* Chuttanutta.
SYKES, FRANCIS: arrived at Calcutta in 1751, Assistant at Kasimbazar in 1756, creates local Revenue Boards 1765, Resident at Murshidabad 1765–8: 54, 64–5, 78, 82, 93, 96, 167, 225, 255, 287, 333.
TAHSILDAR, native officer collecting revenue from a given tract under a Zemindar, usually one or two parganas worth two or three lacs per annum: 11, 17.
TAHUD, a contract: 194.
TALUK, TALUCK, TAALUK, TALUQ, a small class of estate sometimes subordinate to the Zemindari: 11, 17, 76, 159.
TALUKDAR, holder of a *taluk*: 260, 312.
TAMLUK, TAMLOOK, subdivision in Midnapore district: 307.
TANADAR, THANADAR, an officer in charge of a small military post or police station, called Thana: 13, 27, 178 revival of *tanadars*, 271, 326.
TANDA, ancient capital of Bengal: 23.
TASHKHIS, TESHCUSH, revenue assessment, 'conjectural valuation': 298.
TEEP (cf. English *tip*), a present: 57.
TEIGNMOUTH, LORD: *see* Shore.
TEMPORARY PLAN OF REVENUE (*see* Revenue): 304–5.
TENASSERIM, town in Burmah: 19.
TENURE: *see* Settlement.
TERRY, TERAI, JUNGLE-TERRY, districts which receive drainage from hills and thus have peculiarities of soil, and climate unhealthy: 180.
THOMAS, GEORGE: Ensign in 1763, Captain 1766, killed by Sunnyassis December 29, 1772: 216.
TIPPERAH, district in Eastern Bengal: 307.
TIRHUT, former district in north-eastern Bengal, now divided: 2, 23.
TOBACCO, 3, 15, 19, 58–60, 80, 130 open trade in, 232 thirty per cent. duty on, 244, 251, 308.
TODAR MAL, Hindu Raja, finance minister to Akbar, 1580: 8.
TOOMAR JUMMA, Akbar's assessment made in 1571 for Delhi, &c., and in 1582 for Bengal; first recorded assessment for India.
TOUZEE, TAUJI, a book of monthly accounts, the collector's rent-roll or register of persons from whom revenue is due: 272.
TRADE (*see also* Inland Trade, Private Trade, Investment and Monopoly): 3, 5, 16, 18–20, 32,

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

35–41, 74–5, 78–9, 80–8 abuses, 117 trade to be free, 129, 130 of servants restricted, 133 Committee of Trade created, 134, 142, 162 duties removed, 187 trade with Oudh, 219–54 reforms, 242 trade with Europe, 322.

TREASURY, COMPANY'S, IN CALCUTTA: 133 Calcutta Committee of, 137, 138, 170 functions of, 184, 228, 233–5, 318.

TREATY: 133 power to treat.

TRIAL OF WARREN HASTINGS, 323.

TRIBUTE, share of Bengal revenues paid to the Mogul as supreme landowner: 55 amount of, 61, 147 withheld, 167–9, 187, 233 'a drain on currency'.

TUCCAUBEE, TAKAVI, advances made to cultivators at sowing time, or in bad seasons: 275.

TUMLOOK: *see* Tamluk.

TUSHKEES: *see* Tashkhis.

TWO AND A HALF PER CENT. BOUNTY, a bounty granted to servants in lieu of the Inland Trade monopoly: 60, 132, 138, 174.

UJAGGER MULL, Amil of Jessore: 91.

USURY, 161, 20 to 30 per cent., 259, 271.

VACKEEL, WAKIL, an agent, ambassador, attorney, messenger: 27–8, 71, 161, 168–9.

VANSITTART, GEORGE: arrived at Calcutta in 1761, Resident at Midnapore in 1768, Supervisor 1769, Second on Revenue Board at Patna 1771, Chief at Patna 1772: 89, 90, 323, 334, 337.

— HENRY: arrived in Madras in 1746, transferred to Calcutta in 1760, President 1760–4, Director 1769, lost at sea with other Supervisors 1769: 51, 53, 60, 66, 96–102 government of, 112, 113, 152, 175, 278, 323.

VERELST, HARRY: arrived at Calcutta 1749, Chief at Chittagong in 1762, President 1767–9: 58, 65, 83, 114 note, 175, 223, 323.

VERNEY, RALPH, second Earl, 1712–91: Whig politician, M.P. for Buckinghamshire 1768–91, patron of Edmund Burke, squandered his estate: 112.

VILLAGE COMMUNITY, 1, 6, 7, 46, 109, 209–11.

VIZIER, WAZIR, the Subadar of Oudh, who was Vizier of the Mogul Empire (*see* Shuja-ud-Dowla): 48, 54, 101, 116, 166, 181–9, 202, 227.

WALLER, SAMUEL: arrived at Calcutta in 1744, writer, factor at Dacca 1757: 93.

WAREHOUSE-KEEPER, servant in charge of investment goods at a dépôt or factory: 37, 109, 308.

WATTS, HUGH: arrived at Calcutta in 1753, Commissary-general in 1762.

— WILLIAM: arrived at Calcutta in 1737, fifth at Patna in 1745, Zemindar of Calcutta in 1751, Chief at Kasimbazar in 1753–8, probably left India in that year: 43, 46, 93.

WAZIR: *see* Vizier.

'WEALTH OF NATIONS,' Adam Smith's classic on economics, published 1776: 221.

WEAVERS, 38, 43, 46, 109, 237.

WILMOT, ROBERT: arrived at Calcutta in 1764, Supervisor of Jessore in 1770: 89.

WRITER, clerk, the lowest rank in the East India Company's service, nominal salary £5: 35–7, 42, 74–5.

YETASAUB (cf. *yati* = an ascetic; *jett-ryot* = senior of a village), a judicial officer: 326.

ZABITA KHAN, Buxey of the Mogul Empire, son of Najib-ud-Daula: defeated by Marathas in Bijnor about 1770, and in Rohilkand in 1771, ruled in Saharanpur 1770–85: 185.

ZEMINDAR, district revenue collector, publican, farmer of the taxes: 8–9, 11, 17, 18, 25, 28, 36, 40, 44, 48, 53, 56, 62–3, 71–2, 77, 80, 128, 157, 159–61 powers of, 178, 209 functions of, 260, 264 Francis's views of, 280–6 rights of, 312, 330.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

# LIST OF REFERENCES


*Ain-i-Akbari*, by Abu'l Fazl Allami. Jarrett's Translation.
Aitcheson, C. U. *Treaties, Engagements, and Sunnuds.*
Baden-Powell. *The Indian Village Community.* *Land Revenue of India.*
Bernier. *Travels in Hindostan.*
Beveridge, Henry. *A Comprehensive History of India.*
Broome, Captain A. *History of the Bengal Army.*
Buchanan-Hamilton, Dr. F. *Dinajpur.* *Drawings.*
Buckle, E. *Bengal Artillery.*
*Calendar of Persian Correspondence.*
Census of India, 1901.
Dodwell and Miles. *Indian Army List*, 1760–1837.
Dow, Alex. *History of Hindostan*, published 1770.
Elphinstone. *History of India.*
Ferishta. *History of the Dekkan.* Translated by Captain Scott.
Forrest, Sir George. *The Administration of Warren Hastings in Bengal.*
" " *Selections from the Dispatches of Governors-General of Bengal. Warren Hastings.*
" " *Selections from State Papers preserved in the Foreign Department.*
Foster, W. *The English Factories in India*, 1630–4.
Francis, Philip. *Original Papers relative to the Disturbances in Bengal*, 1782. (India Office Catalogue, p. 165.)
Gladwin, Francis. *A Narrative of the Transactions in Bengal.*
Gleig, G. R. *Memoirs of Warren Hastings.*
Hill, S. C. *List of Europeans in the Siege of Calcutta*, 1756.
" " *Three Frenchmen in Bengal.*
" " *Bengal*, 3 vols. Indian Record Series.
" " *Catalogue of Orme MSS.*
Hoey, W. *Memoirs of Delhi and Faizabad.*
Holdich. *India* (Regions of the World Series).
Hunter, Sir W. W. *Annals of Rural Bengal.* *Bengal MS. Records.*
Ilbert, Sir C. *The Government of India.*
Innes, P. R. *Bengal European Regiment.*
Kaye, Sir J. W. *Administration of the East India Company.*
Martin, Montgomery. *History of Eastern India.*
Morley, John, Lord. *Life of Edmund Burke.*
*Parliamentary Papers*, vol. vii.
Phillippart. *East India Military Calendar.*
Prinsep, J. *Useful Tables.*
Rameluuder Doss. *General Register of the Honourable East India Company's Civil Servants of the Bengal Establishment*, 1790–1842. Calcutta, 1844.
*Reports of Committees of the House of Commons*, vols. iii–v.
*Sair Mutaqherin, or a View of Modern Times, being a History of India from the year* 1118 *to* 1195 *of the Hedijah.* From the Persian of Ghulam Hussein Khan.
Shore, John. *Life of Lord Teignmouth.*
Stephen, Sir J. FitzJames. *Nuncomar and Impey.*
Strachey, Sir J. *Hastings and the Rohilla War.*
Tieffenthaler, J. *Description de l'Inde.*
Vansittart, H. *A Narrative of Transactions in Bengal from 1760 to 1764.*
Wheeler, J. T. *Early Records of British India.* Calcutta, 1878.
Williams, Captain. *Historical Account of the Bengal Native Infantry.*
Wilson, C. R. *Old Fort William.* *Early Annals of the English in Bengal.*
" H. W. *Glossary of Indian Terms.*


NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

00103070

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA

Digitized with financial assistance from

NSDL
Technology, Trust & Reach

on 16 November, 2018

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF INDIA